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SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS FORCES

U. S. PACIFIC FLEET

Misc Reports

U.S. Pacific Fleet. Amphibious Force.

87

INFORMATION ON AND COMMENTS CONCERNING

SUICIDE PLANE ATTACKS

249

59

56

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56

58

UNCLASSIFIED

#372

Report Documentation Page

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Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

CAF/A16-3(7)
Serial: 00406

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

90/Me

25 June 1945.

~~S E C R E T~~

From: Commander Amphibious Forces, U. S. Pacific Fleet.
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.

Subject: Information on and Comments Concerning Suicide Plane Attacks.

Reference: (a) "Counter Measures Against Suicide Planes" issued 20 May by ComPhibGrp 7.

Enclosure:
(A) Com5thFleet Sec. Desp. 080200 of February.
(B) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Desp. 090150 of April.
(C) USS JEFFERS (DMS 27) Sec. Desp. 130415 of April.
(D) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Desp. 140100 of April.
(E) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Desp. 150528 of April.
(F) USS ROOKS (DD 804) Sec. Mlgm 180650 of April.
(G) CTF 51 (ComPhibsPac) Sec. Desp. 081015 of May.
(H) CTF 51 (ComPhibsPac) Sec. Desp. 112325 of May.
(I) USS COWELL Sec. Desp. 170908 of May.
(J) USS LAFFEY Sec. Desp. 220355 of May.
(K) ComPhibsPac Sec. Ser. 0067 of 5 Feb. 1945 "Suicide Plane Attacks."
(L) USS BROWN (DD 546) Conf. Ser. 163 of 2 May 1945 "Formation and Procedure used on Radar Picket Stations."
(M) ComDesRon 2 Sec. Ser. 00505 of 10 May 1945 "Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks" with enclosures.
(N) CTG 51.5 Sec. Ser. 0021 of 14 May 1945 "Tactical Plans for Radar Picket Groups."
(O) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Ser. 0097 of 15 May 1945 "Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks."
(P) CTF 54 (ComCruDiv 5) Sec. Ser. 0020 of 22 May 1945 "Correlated Opinions of Unit Commanders and Commanding Officers of those Ships who have Engaged Suiciders."
(Q) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Ser. 0084 of 11 May 1945 "Intelligence Reports Regarding Attacks on Three (3) Ships in the OKINAWA Area from 28 April to 9 May 1945."
(R) ComLCIGrp 16 Sec. Ser. 004 of 9 May 1945 "Suicide Planes, Weapons and Maneuvers Against" and 1st End. by ComLCIFlot 3.
(S) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Ser. 0080 of 11 May 1945 "Intelligence Reports Regarding Attacks on Fifteen (15) Ships in the OKINAWA Area from 26 April to 4 May 1945."
(T) CTG 51.15 (ComPhibGrp 7) Sec. Ser. 0090 of 13 May 1945 "Intelligence Report Regarding Suicide Plane Attack on USS TERROR (CM 5) in KERAMA RETTO Anchorage, 1 May 1945."
(U) USS EVANS Sec. Ser. 003 of 21 May 1945 "Methods Used Against Jap Air Attacks on 11 May 1945."
(V) USS H.F. BAUER (DM 26) Sec. Ser. 004 of 13 May 1945

CAF/A16-3(7)
Serial: 00406

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

90/Me

~~S E C R E T~~

25 June 1945.

Subject: Information on and Comments Concerning Suicide Plane Attacks.

"Observations Made During Air Attack 11 May 1945."
(W) CTU 51.19.5 (ComLCIFlot 6) Conf. Ser. 0186 of 11 May 1945 "Suicide Planes - Countermeasures."
(X) USS H.A. WILEY (DM 29) Conf. Ser. 044 of 12 May 1945 "Recommended Procedure for Combatting Suicide Attacks."
(Y) USS WILLMARCH (DE 638) Conf. Ser. 06 of 17 April 1945 "Lessons Learned and Recommendations" and 1st End. by ComCortDiv 40.
(Z) USS PURDY Sec. Ser. 003 of 26 May 1945 "AA Procedure Against Japanese Suicide Planes."

1. Enclosures (A) to (Z), inclusive, are copies of the more significant reports and recommendations received or originated by this command relative to suicide plane attacks. These are forwarded because of their possible usefulness in the special investigation of this subject now being conducted under CominCh.

2. Other reports and recommendations will be forwarded from time to time. ComPhibGrp 7 has been requested to forward copies of reference (a).

R. K. TURNER.

Copy to:
Cincpac (Advance)
Com3rdFleet
Com5thFleet
Com7thFleet
Com3rdPhibFor
Com5thPhibFor
Com7thPhibFor
AdComPhibsPac
ComDesPac
ComEsCarFor
ANSCOL.

AUTHENTICATED:

W. C. MOTT,
Commander, USNR,
Flag Secretary.

U.S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

CLASSIFICATION: [redacted]

PRECEDENCE: ROUTINE

081200

IN RECENT OPERATIONS JAPANESE SUICIDE PLANE ATTACKS HAVE BEEN MADE BY SINGLE OR SMALL GROUPS OF PLANES BOTH HIGH AND LOW LEVEL WITHOUT PREVIOUS WARNING FROM LOOKOUTS OR RADAR X THERE MAY IN FUTURE BE SUICIDE ATTACKS BY LARGER FORMATIONS X DANGER FROM THESE ATTACKS

CAN BE REDUCED BY ALERTNESS HIGH VOLUME OF WELL DIRECTED FIRE AND HIGH SPEED MANEUVERS X LOOKOUTS AND AA GUNCREWS MUST BE ALERT FOR SUCH ATTACKS AT ALL TIMES WHEN ENEMY AIR ATTACK IS REASONABLY POSSIBLE AND MUST NOT BE DISTRACTED FROM OWN SECTOR OF RESPONSIBILITY BY ATTACKS

FROM OTHER SECTORS AA GUNCREWS MUST BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY FRIENDLY AND ENEMY PLANE TYPES PROMPTLY MUST BE FAMILIAR WITH APPROACH PROCEDURE FI FRIENDLY PLANES AND BE READY AND AUTHORIZED TO OPEN FIRE WITHOUT WAITI FOR ORDERS IF AN ENEMY PLANE IS SIGHTED PRESSING HOME ATTACK X EACH

GUNCREW MUST BE THOROUGHLY TRAINED AND BE POSITIVELY FAMILIAR WITH FIRING PRINCIPLES AND WITH EQUIPMENT X THIS MUST BE INDIVIDUALLY

TOR - TOD 1316/11 FEB 45/ 102-S/2262 H/ GR 483/CP/ WS

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
COM5THFLT	5THFLT	CINCPAC
081200	PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	ShPT
X	X	X	X	X		A			X	X	X	A			X	X		X	A		
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	CivEng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN	CIC		SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	AR
										X			X								

FOR[illegible] NAME

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[SECRET] 080200 ROUTINE

CHECKED ON EACH SHIP AT EACH GUN X 40 MM AND 20 MM BATTERIES WILL DESTROY ENEMY PLANES IF HITS ARE ATTAINED X IF PROJECTILES ARE NOT SEEN DETONATING THEY ARE MISSES X WITH VOLUME OF FIRE AVAILABLE NO PLANE SHOULD ESCAPE IF FIRING IS ACCURATE X GUNCREWS MUST BE PROPERLY

INDOCTRINATED TO AVOID INDESCRIMINATE FIRING ON OWN AIRCRAFT BY MEN WITH ITCHY TRIGGER FINGERS X HOWEVER PLANE NOT FOLLOWING APPROACH PROCEDURE SPECIFIED FOR FREINDLY PLANES WILL BE ASSUMED ENEMY UNLESS IDNETIFIED AS FRIENDLY X OWN AIRCRAFT MUST CONFROM TO APPROACH PROCEDURE

SPECIFIED AND AVOID MANEUVERS WHICH MAY BE CONSTRUED AS HOSTILE X ATTENTION IS INVITED TO FACT THAT OWN CRIPPLED PLANES MAY NOT BEABLE TO CONFORM TO SPECIFIED PROCEDURES X VT FUSED PROJECTILES MUST NOT BE FIRED OVER OWN SHIPS X SHIPS MUST BE MANEUVERED AT HIGHEST PRACTICABLE

SPEED BY OTC X COMMANDING OFFICERS MUST TAKE THE INITIATIVE OF INDEPENDENT MANEUVER TO DENY THE SUICIDE PLANE AN ATTACK FROM BOW OR QUARTER

TOR - TOD

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
080200	PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARMY

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

~~SECRET~~ 090150/APRIL PRIORITY

ON BASIS OF INTELLIGENCE INTERROGATIONS OF PERSONNEL AND EXAMINATION OF PLANE PARTS AND DOCUMENTS ABOARD 8 DD'S AND OTHER ESCORT TYPES HIT BY SUICIDERS AND BY OWN OBSERVATION 3 ATTACKS ON SHIPPING IN VICINITY.

KERAMA RETTO FOLLOWING INFORMATION SUSTAINED X (A) PLANES GENERALLY APPROACH AT VERY LOW ALTITUDE X IN SOME INSTANCES 10 TO 20 FEET OFF WATER X WHEN POSSIBLE APPROACH FROM BEHIND LAND MASSES X (B) SUICIDE

PLANES WILL OFTEN SELECT ISOLATED VESSELS CRIPPLED SHIPS OR SHIPS WITH RELATIVE WEAK FIRE POWER AS TARGETS X THIS APPARENTLY REGARDLESS PRESENCE IN SAME VICINITY OF HIGHER PRIORITY TARGETS X (C) GREAT VARIETY OF PLANES

EMPLOYED IN THESE ATTACKS BUT NO NEW MODELS IDENTIFIED X EXAMINATION OF MANUFACTURES PLATES FROM PORTIONS OF 1 SUICIDE PROBABLY KATE INDICATES PLANE BUILT IN 1938 OR 1939 AND SOME PARTS MANUFACTURED AS FAR BACK AS

TOR - TOD 0737/9 APR 45/4420 KCS/7-S/GR 310/LBC/CS

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
CTG 51.15	CTF 51	COM5THFLT
090150/APRIL	PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PT
X	X	X	X	X		X					X										
FL-LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY
										H											

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 090150 PRIORITY

1927 X (D) DECOY OR DIVERSIONARY PLANES JUST OUT OF RANGE OFTEN USED TO ATTRACT ATTENTION WHILE SUICIDE IS MAKING ITS APPROACH FROM ANOTHER DIRECTION X (E) COORDINATED ATTACKS REPORTED 4 INSTANCES WITH PLANES

COMING IN FROM SEVERAL ANGLES SIMULTANEOUSLY X (F) PLANES MAKING THEIR APPROACH ABSORB GREAT PUNISHMENT WITHOUT BEING DESTROYED OR THROWN OFF COURSE X INDICATING POSSIBILITY THESE PLANES ARE SPECIALLY ARMORED X

PIECES OF QUARTER INCH ARMOR RECOVERED

TOR - TOD

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
090150	PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
FL LT	FI SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY

CLASSIFICATION [redacted]

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC
13Ø415

PRECEDENCE PRIORITY

REPORT CONCERNING CONTROLLED BOMB ATTACK MADE ON THIS SHIP APRIL 12 IN RP 12 X BOMB DROPPED FROM 14ØØØ YARDS/RANGE ESTIMATED 4ØØØ FT ALTITUDE FROM TWIN ENGINE BOMBER POSSIBLE HELEN TRACKING 17Ø KNOTS LEVEL FLIGHT

GOING OUT X BOMBER FLIPPED WINGS STEEP BAND BOMB DROPPING AWAY SLOWLY THEN EMITTING EXHAUST SMOKE X KEPT BOBMER UNDER FIRE TILL BOMB TURNED TOWARD THIS VESSEL INTO TORPEDO TYPE RUN X COMMENCED FIRING ON BOMB ON

TRACK OF 215 KNOTS RAPIDLY INCREASING X OBSERVATIONS INDICATE STRONG RESEMBLANCE HEADON APPEARANCE TOJO OR JACK ALSO TALLYING DESCRIPTION REFERENCE CINCPAC ADV HQ 1Ø115Ø X BOMB HAS SHORT STRAIGHT LOW WING HEAVY

ROUND BODY NO UNDERCARRIAGE VERY SMALL TAIL IF ANY BELIEVED JET PROPELLED LOW BUBBLE CONOPY INDICATES POSSIBLE PILOT CONTROL X ARMOR INDICATED BY MANY OBSERVED 2ØMM HITS X RAPID ACCELERATION ESTIMATED REACHING 45Ø KNOTS

ON STRAIGHT COURSE TILL SUDDEN DIP AT END X BELIEVE USE OF ROBOT OR

TOR - TOD Ø713/13 APRIL 45/1Ø2 S/371 KCS/GR 353/CP

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
USS JEFFERS (DMS 27)	CTF 51/	CTF 54/CTG 51.5
CTF 51 13Ø415		COM5THFLT/CINCPAC (BOTH) CNO/COMINCH/5THFLT (ECM)

(PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES)

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	ShPTY
X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X					X			
FL LT	FI SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY
										X						X				X	

(C)

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

13Ø415

SUICIDE BOMB COORDINATED WITH ATTACK BY SLOWER WEAVING SUICIDE VALS ON IDENTICAL TORPEDO TYPE RUNS TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE ENORMOUS SPEED AS FINAL BLOW OF CONCERTED ATTACK X CARRYING PLANE MANEUVERS OUT OF

EFFECTIVE RANGE ON ROUGHLY OPPOSITE COURSE X RECOMMEND EARLIEST POSSIBLE FIRING ON BOMBER USING HIGH PERCENTAGE INFLUENCE FUZE SHIFTING TARGET IMMEDIATELY WHEN BOMB RELEASED X RECOMMEND INTRODUCING HIGH INITIAL SPEED

IN COMPUTER WHEN TARGET ANGLE IS Ø SHIFTING TO AA COMMON AT ONCE AS BOMB DROPS TO LOW ALTITUDE

REF: 1Ø115Ø -...SPAN 16 FT LENGTH 2Ø FT X WINGS AND EMPENNAGE PLYWOOD FUSELAGE ALUMINUM X ...NO UNDER CARRIAGE PROVISION AND FUSELAGE CONSTRUCTION APPEAR TO PRECLUDE ANY BUT AIR LAUNCHINGS BY MOTHER PLANE X

TOR - TOD

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
13Ø415	PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED.	Milop	AERO	PRO	CivEng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 141100 ROUTINE

INTELLIGENCE INTERROGATION PERSONNEL STANLEY (DD 478) REVEALS SHIP ATTACKED 12 APRIL 1400 TO 1548 NEAR PICKET STATION 2 BY VALS ZEKES AND PILOTED BOMBS X FIRST OF LATTER NOTICED EMERGING FROM HIGH ALTITUDE DOGFIGHT 4 MILES DISTANT AND TRAILING LONG THIN STREAK BLACK SMOKE X FIRST

BOMB DOVE 30 DEGREE ANGLE LEVELLED OUT CRASHED THROUGH STARBOARD BOW AND SPLASHED ON PORT SIDE X 15 MINUTES LATER SECOND BOMB ALSO STREAKING BLACK SMOKE APPROACHED WEAVING 12-15 FEET OVER WATER FROM 4000 YARDS ON STARBOARD BEAM CLIPPED ENSIGN ON AFTER STACK AND DISINTEGRATED IN WATER

OFF PORT BEAM X DESCRIPTION X LOW MID WING SILVER COLORED MONOPLANE X WING SPAN ABOUT 15 FEET X STREAMLINED FUSELAGE ABOUT 20 FEET IN LENGTH X CIRCULAR SLIGHTLY OVAL BLACK NOSE X VERY STUBBY WING WITH SQUARE TIPS X TWIN TAIL PLANE WITH DIHEDRAL AND SQUARISH FINS AND RUDDERS X BRIGHT

JAPANESE INSIGNIA ON UNDERSIDE EACH WING AND BOTH SIDES FUSELAGE X NO ENGINE PROPELLER UNDERCARRIAGE GUNS OR ROCKET ATTACHMENTS OBSERVED X POSSIBLE AIRSCOOP AND FLAME OBSERVED UNDER FUSALAGE IN FLIGHT X NEITHER

TOR - TOD 0438/14 APRIL 45/4420 KCS/102-S/GR 347/JHS

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
CTG 51.15	CTF 51	COM5THFLT/COMDESDIV 4/CTF 54
CTF 51		CINCPAC (BOTH)/COMINCH
141100		PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G3	G	G4	Sh PTY
FL LT	FI SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY
X	X	X	X	X		X			X		X		X					X	X		
			X							X						X				X	

(1)

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 14/100 ROUTINE

BOMB EXPLODED X SECOND BOMB APPARENTLY ABSORBED LARGE VOLUME 40MM AA DURING APPROACH X SPEED ESTIMATED BY OBSERVERS UP TO 500 KNOTS X SOME MANEUVERABILITY INDICATED BUT SHIP;PROBABLY AVOIDED GREATER DAMAGE BY

HIGH SPEED EVASIVE TACTICS X PARTS RECOVERED SHOW PLYWOOD CONSTRUCTION COVERED WITH LIGHT BLUE LACQUERED SILK X PARTS OF PILOT RECOVERED

TOR - TOD

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
14/100	PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PT
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	CivEng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 15Ø528 PRIORITY

SUMMARY INTERROGATIONS PERSONNEL STANLY ABELE JEFFERS ALL ATTACKED 14ØØ-17ØØ 12 APRIL BY VIPER (PILOTED) BOMBS INDICATES GENERAL CONCURRENCE IN DESCRIPTION AS CONTAINED CTF 51 Ø3113Ø AND CTG 51.15 14Ø1Ø9 X ONLY

OBSERVATION OF LAUNCHING WAS BY JEFFERS X PARENT WAS TWIN ENGINE PLANE WITH STRAIGHT LEADING WING EDGE AND TAPERED TRAILING EDGE POSSIBLY HELEN X VIPER HAD APPEARANCE OF VERY TORPEDO CARRIED UNDER FUSELAGE AND

LAUNCHED WHILE ON OPPOSITE COURSE PARALLEL TO JEFFERS 7 MILES DISTANT X TRAIL LIGHT BROWN SMOKE ACCOMPANIED LAUNCHING X FINAL APPROACHES ALL CASES WERE AN OBLIDUS OR VERY LOW OVER WATER X SPEED SHORTLY AFTER LAUNCH-

ING COMPUTED 2ØØ-25Ø KNOTS ACCELERATING ON APPROACHES UP TO ESTIMATED 5ØØ KNOTS X EVIDENCE INDICATES PROBABILITY VIPER LAUNCHED WITHIN VISUAL RANGE OF TARGET X ON 4 VIPERS ATTACKING THESE SHIPS ONLY 1 KNOWN TO HAVE

DEFINITELY DETONATED IN ABELE X ALL LEFT TRAIL OF BLACK OR BROWN SMOKE

TOR - TOD Ø9Ø3/15 APRIL 45/4420COS/7-S/GR 274/LBC/JEM

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
CTG 51.15	CTF 51	COM5THFLT/CINCPAC ADV
15Ø528		PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PT
X	X	X	A	X		X			X		X		X					X	X		
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY
										X						X			X		

(6)

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 150528 PRIORITY

AT SOME STAGE OF FLIGHT WHICH FACILITATED DETECTION OTHERWISE DIFF-ICULT DUE TO SIZE COLOR SPEED X EVIDENCE ALL BOMBS HAD HUMAN PILOTS

REF: - Ø3113Ø - CTF 51 - JAPANESE PILOTED BUZZ-BOMB EXAMINED TODAY OKINAWA ISLAND ROCKET PROPELLED SINGLE-SEAT-ER SUICIDE MONOPLANE 12 FOOT WING SPREAD 14 FEET LING TWIN TAIL PAINTED SILVER X.....

REF: - 14Ø1Ø9 - CTG 51.15 - NOT ON FILES

TOR - TOD 15 APRIL 45/JEM

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
150528		PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 18Ø65Ø MGM

HAVING OBSERVED A NUMBER OF SUICIDE ATTACKS ON OUR VESSELS HAVING BEEN THE TARGET FOR AT LEAST 3 SUCH ATTACKS HAVING IN MIND BUZZ BOMBS AND SIMILAR TYPE WEAPON S WHICH ORANGE MAY SOON PERFECT AND HAVING OBSERVED

OUR ENEMY AT WAR SINCE 7 JULY 1937 IT IS THE BELIEF OF THIS COMMAND THAT DUMMY SHIPS REALISTICALLY RESEMBLING DD TYPES AND JUDICIOUSLY PLACED COULD BE USED EFFECTIVELY IN A GREAT NUMBER OF WAYS IN REDUCING THE EVER

GROWING DAMAGE INFLICTED ON DD AND SIMILAR TYPES BY THE ABOVE MENTIONED ATTACK METHODS X THIS AT THE SAME TIME WOULD LIMIT ENEMY'S CAPABILITIES IN THIS DIRECTION X 1 SPECIFIC POSSIBLE USE OF SUCH A DECOY WOULD BE AS

A RADAR PICKET EQUIPPED ONLY WITH NECESSARY RADAR COMMUNICATIONS LIFE SAVING FACILITIES AND THE MINIMUM OF PERSONNEL REQUIRED X TO BE TENDED BY A VERY SMALL TYPE VESSEL ADEQUATELLY AA ARMED WHICH WOULD TOW DUMMY

TO STATION REMAIN IN VICINITY AND RESCUE PERSONNEL AFTER A SUCCESSFUL

TOR - TOD 18 APRIL 45/MGM/KLM /Ø537/2Ø APRIL/45

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
USS ROOKS DD 8Ø4	CTF 51	CTG 51.5/COMDESRON 2/23/45/49/-55/56/6Ø/63/66/
18Ø65Ø	PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X								
FL LT	FI SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	CivEng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY
										A											

(E)

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 18Ø65Ø MGM

SUICIDE ATTACK X IN THE FACE OF SUCH AN ATTACK PERSONNEL WOULD IMMEDIATELY ABANDON SHIP X IT IS SUGGESTED THAT THE POSSIBLE USES OF A RUSE OF

THIS NATURE BE CONSIDERED FOR EXPLOITATION AT THE EARLIEST PRACTICABLE DATE

TOR - TOD

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
18Ø65Ø	PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES	

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PT
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

CLASSIFICATION | PRECEDENCE

[redacted] 081015 PRIORITY

ANALYSIS ACTION REPORTS REVEALS WIDE VARIATION IN TACTICS OF RADAR PICKET GROUPS IN DEFEATING SUICIDE ATTACKS X IN MANY CASES BY EXPLOITING SPEED MUTUAL SUPPORT OF SUPPORT CRAFT IS COMPLETELY LOST X THE ORIGINATOR

HAS NOT SERVED IN RADAR PICKET DUTY AND HESITATES TO LAY DOWN EXACT TACTICAL RULES FOR THEM AND DESIRES YOU APPOINT A BOARD OF 1 OR MORE EXPERIENCED DESTROYER OFFICERS TO FORMULATE 2 OR 3 STANDARD TACTICAL

PLANS FOR RADAR PICKET GROUPS, SUCH PLANS TO MAKE BEST USE OF MUTUAL SUPPORT AND EXPLOIT SPEED ALSO IF PRACTICABLE X PARA IT APPEARS NOW AS IF BEST PLAN IS TO PUT SLOW SHIPS IN CENTER CIRCLING AND FAST SHIPS

CLOSE OUTBOARD ALSO CIRCLING X ATTEMPTS AT EVASION OF SUICIDE ATTACKS SEEMS USELESS X CONCENTRATED GUNFIRE IS BELIEVED TO BE THE BEST

1155 - 483

TOR - TOD 8 MAY 45/1002-S/LBC/CS

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
CTF 51 081015	CT G 51.5	CTG 52.2/CTG 52.15/COM5THFLT/ TG 51.5/(ECM HOLDERS)/ CTG 52.21

ADM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
X	X	X	X			A															
FL LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY

(6)

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

CLASSIFICATION: SECRET

112325

PRECEDENCE: ROUTINE

EXPERIENCE OF SHIPS ATTACKED REVEALS BAKA BOMBS VULNERABLE AND CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY COUNTERED BY ACCURATE GUNFIRE X BAKA SPOTTED VISUALLY AT RANGES UP TO 7000 YARDS, ALTITUDE 40 TO 5000 FEET IN SHALLOW GLIDE OR JUST OVER WATER X NO COURSE DEVIATION ONCE FINAL

RUN COMMENCED X SPEEDS UP TO 500 KNOTS X ATTACKS BY SUICIDE VALS OR JILLS MAY PRECEDE OR FOLLOW BAKA ATTACK X PRESENCE OF SLOW FLYING TWIN ENGINE BOMBERS ESPECIALLY BETTYS INDICATES POSSIBLE BAKA ATTACK X TO DESTROY FOLLOWING METHODS WORTH CONSIDERING X A X FIXED

BARRAGE WITH 2 SECOND FUSE SETTING AND ALSO USING VT PROJECTILES X B X TRACER CONTROL OF BOTH 40MM AND 20MM INSTEAD OF TRACKING WITH MARK 51 DIRECTOR OR MARK 14 SIGHT X PARA X ON BAKA HAD NOSE COWLING RIPPED OFF BY HIGH VOLUME 40MM AND 20MM FIRE DURING FINAL APPROACH X

ESTIMATE DISTANCE AT WHICH BAKA WILL TRIGGER VT FUSE 80% THAT OF PLANE OF USUAL TYPE

Pac 26 – 21675
0103 – 453

OR - TOD 12 MAY 45/145-S/WS/JHS

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
CTF 51 112325	TF 51	COM5THFLT/CTF 58/CINCPAC(BOTH)/ COMDESPAC

ADM	COS	ACOS	ORER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh PTY
X	X	X	X	X		X					X										
L LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	ARTY
										X											

CLASSIFICATION

U. S. NAVAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC

PRECEDENCE

1755/30 DEFERRED

YOUR L 1727 X MEASURE BY [illegible] ELL, NONE ORIGINAL WHICH HAVE SUBDIVIDED TO DATE AGAINST 4 SUCH DI ATTACKS AND OTHERS ARE: (A) EARLY RAPID AND

CONSISTANT VOLUME OF C FIRE BY MAIN BATTERY AND BY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS MANNED BY GUNNERS WHO ARE AS IGNED SECTOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR

REPORTING AND OPENING FIRE OF EARLY (B) EARLY MANEUVERS AT 35 KNOTS TO PLACE TARGET NEARBEAM AND TO TAKE EVASIVE ACTION IF REQUIRED

(C) UTILIZATION ALL HANDS TOPSIDE AS LOOKOUTS ESPEC ESPECIALLY GOOD RESULTS FROM REPAIR PARTY ON MAIN DECK IN REPORTING LOW FLYING TARGETS

X OTHER FACTOR FOR WHICH WHOLE HEARTED CREDIT IS GIVEN IS EXCELLENT SUPPORT BY CAP AND SURFACE CRAFT

TOR - TOD [illegible] H 3/0

ORIGINATOR	ACTION	INFORMATION
[illegible] ELL (Adv)	CTF [illegible]	CTG 51.5/CDR 45/ [illegible] DIV 32

OM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	Sh
	X	X	X			X			X		X		X								
LT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	AI
										X											

CLASSIFICATION | **SERVICE**
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC | **PRECEDENC[E]**

[illegible] 222205 PRIORITY

[illegible] CTF 162305 MAY WHO GETS [illegible] ACTION X WHEN UNDER ATTACK BY [illegible]CRAFT FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS SUGGEST DIVIDED FIRE USING MOUNT 3

IN LOCAL CONTROL WITH MOUNT CAPTAIN [illegible]ING FROM OPEN HATCH USING ALL VT PROJECTILES X RECOMMEND USE OF QUADRANT CONTROL FOR MACHINE

[illegible]S WITH AN OFFICER AT EACH CONTROL STATION AND AIR DEFENSE OFFICER [illegible] 1 MC ANNOUNCING SYSTEM FOR PRIMARY TARGET DESIGNATION AND TELE-

[illegible]ONES FOR SECONDARY X

[illegible] (162305)-CONGRATULATIONS ARE EXTENDED TO YOU ON YOUR SPLENDID RECORD AGAINST ENEMY AIRCRAFT X YOU HAVE DONE AN EXCELLENT JOB AGAINST ENEMY PLANES X PARA X IN VIEW OF THE HIGH SCORE OF PLANES [illegible] YOUR GUNS DESIRE YOU SUBMIT ANY SPECIAL [illegible] OR TECHNIQUE WHICH MIGHT BE WORTHWHILE TO USE IN FUTURE TO FURTHER [illegible] THE JAP AIRFORCE X...

TOR - TOD 0343/22 MAY 45/[illegible]/[illegible] 143/ACW [handwritten initials]

ORIGINATOR	**ACTION**	**INFORMATION**
[illegible]FEY [illegible] 2202[illegible]	CTF 51	CTG 52.2/CTG 52.15/ CTG 51.5/COMDESRON 32

COM	COS	ACOS	OPER	INT	CON	GUN	LOG	TQM	COMM	SDO	CASCU	AGC	CIC		CG	CS	G1	G2	G3	G4	S
	X	X	X			X															
FLT	Fl SEC	MED	Milop	AERO	PRO	Civ Eng	SUP	PUBS	CWO	AVIA	CUDT	MAIN			SURG	SIG	ISCOM	ENG	TAF	ORD	A
										X											

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, PACIFIC FLEET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

CAF/A16-3
Serial: 0067

11/fs

[redacted]

5 February 1945

From: Commander Amphibious Forces, U. S. Pacific Fleet.
To : Distribution List.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks.

Enclosure: (A) Information on and Means for Combating Suicide Plane Attacks.

1. The principles set forth in Enclosure (A) for combating Suicide Plane Attacks will be followed by ships and units operating under this command.

2. Enclosure (A) will be revised from time to time as new information becomes available.

R. K. TURNER.

Distribution:

Cominch (Airmail)	(13)	
CinCPac	(10)	
ComFIFTHFleet	(3)	
ComAirPac	(2)	
ComDesPac (ComCruPac)	(2)	
ComCarTransRonPac	(2)	
CominPac	(5)	
ComTHIRDPhib	(3)	
AdComPhibsPac	(2)	
Com1stCarTaskFor	(3)	
ComPhibGrps 1-7, 11-14	(3)	ea.
ComTransRons 11-18	(2)	ea.
Ships and Commands of Task Force FIFTY-ONE	(1)	ea.

AUTHENTICATED:

W. C. MOTT,
Commander, USNR,
Flag Secretary.

(A)

INFORMATION AND MEANS FOR COMBATING SUICIDE PLANE ATTACKS

INTRODUCTION

The principal differences between suicide plane attacks by the Japanese on a large scale and the conventional airplane attack are as follows:

(a) The range of enemy attack is greater because no return trip is necessary.

(b) Percentage of hits is higher because the missile is aimable right up to the point of contact.

(c) Suicide pilots are more determined and daring and are not deterred by actual or psychological obstacles.

(d) The suicide plane with or without a bomb is an extremely effective incendiary agent because of the gasoline carried.

To date no cureall has been found.

PART I

INFORMATION ON ENEMY SUICIDE ATTACKS

GENERAL.

1. Until recently there had been a few instances of suicide attacks by Japanese planes, and most of these were by planes that had been damaged and would have eventually crashed. However, during October in the PHILIPPINES Campaign, the Japanese first initiated large scale, deliberate crash dive tactics. Attacks were numerous, persistent and courageously carried out. Suicide attacks have continued since then and may be expected to increase in ferocity and numbers, as we approach closer to the Japanese homeland.

LOSSES SUSTAINED.

2. Our losses for the period 1 October to 15 December 1944 have been reported as:

	FROM SUICIDE PLANES		FROM ALL OTHER CAUSES (Enemy gunfire, torpedo, bombs)	
	SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED
	1 CVE	6 CVE	1 CVL	1 CVE
	2 DD	3 CV	1 CVE	1 CA
		2 CVL	4 DD	5 CL
		9 DD	2 DE	13 DD
		2 CL		2 DE
		2 OBB		
TOTAL	3	24	8	22

ENCLOSURE (A)

INFORMATION AND MEANS FOR COMBATING SUICIDE PLANE ATTACKS

3. Damage from suicide attacks has been primarily to the ships' topsides, and serious fires have resulted. Even though a ship may not have been sunk when hit by a suicide plane, the consequent operational loss was serious due to the necessity in many cases for the ship's return to a Navy Yard.

TYPES OF PLANES AND ARMAMENT.

4. Various types of planes have been employed for suicide attacks, but the majority have been single place, single engined planes, Zekes predominating.

5. Suicide planes may or may not be armed with bombs. Of those armed with a bomb, most have carried 250 kilogram size. Originally many of the planes crashed without releasing bombs, but recently some planes have released their bombs just before crashing, or on another target. Frequently bombs have exploded either on crashing, or about 20 feet before crashing, without being released from the plane.

METHOD OF APPROACH.

6. Any type of approach may be expected — steep dives, shallow dives and low level runs. The enemy continually varies his type of attack. One recent method has been to approach at low altitude from the bow or stern, parallel to ship's course, (thereby reducing AA fire) and when opposite the ship to execute a "wing over" and crash into the bridge. Strafing may be expected.

7. In order to effect surprise, a suicide plane may:

(a) Approach over land to avoid radar detection.

(b) Approach at low altitude below the radar horizon.

(c) Approach in vicinity of, or follow friendly planes in order to render identification difficult.

(d) Use cloud cover.

(e) Use maximum speed.

(f) Approach from direction of sun.

(g) Approach during low visibility.

(h) Employ simultaneous multiple attacks using one or more planes as decoy.

8. Suicide planes have often attacked isolated or damaged ships.

[redacted] [redacted]

INFORMATION AND MEANS FOR COMBATING SUICIDE PLANE ATTACKS

PART II

MEANS FOR COMBATING SUICIDE PLANE ATTACKS

OFFENSIVE METHODS:

9. Destruction of enemy aircraft on the ground is the most effective method of preventing enemy suicide plane attacks. In the early stages of an amphibious operation, carriers are the principal means for bringing our aircraft within range of enemy airfields. The following types of attack have proved effective:

(a) Fighter sweeps of the enemy airfields to destroy planes on the ground, and airborne over the fields.

(b) Bombing of the airfields to destroy fixed installations and to crater runways.

(c) Night fighter and intruder missions to prevent the enemy from flying reinforcements into or operating from his fields during the night.

(d) Use of long delay fuzes to harass enemy activities at the airfields.

COMBAT AIR PATROL.

10. The Combat Air Patrol is a primary defensive weapon against suicide attacks. The patrol must be maintained in sufficient strength to combat enemy attacks from several directions and altitudes simultaneously. The exact number of planes depends upon the forces available and the size of the unit covered. The Combat Air Patrol should be doubled during dawn and dusk periods. The larger carriers should be available in order to provide a dusk patrol which remains in the air until darkness has set in, as CVE's cannot operate at night without operational losses. A night Combat Air Patrol should be provided for each distinct unit.

11. During cruising conditions the Combat Air Patrol should normally be controlled by a ship that is within 15 miles of the Fleet Center. The Patrol should be orbited over the unit protected and in the direction of expected attacks. About two-thirds of the Patrol should be at high altitude and one-third at low altitude. At the objective area the Combat Air Patrol should not only be over the transport area, but separate detachments should be assigned to the control of picket fighter direction ships. Fighters should be dispersed both high and low over the transport area.

12. The Combat Air Patrol should be informed that ships will shoot during daylight when enemy aircraft approach within 12,000 yards. Fighters must be alert to break off the chase unless the enemy is directly within their sights and they are about to make a kill. In any event, surface

vessels should open up when threatened by enemy aircraft within gun range unless it is evident the fighters are about to make a kill.

IFF

13. Friendly aircraft must be indoctrinated to return to their own dispositions with IFF on. They should, in addition, be on the alert for enemy aircraft who may return close to or with them, and if unable to attack the enemy planes should advise own base of that fact. Whenever possible friendly planes should join up in order to return in large groups and not confuse radar operators with many small formations in the area.

RECOGNITION

14. Friendly planes must avoid flying close to formations of surface vessels insofar as practicable. When it is necessary for friendly planes to approach surface vessels, the planes must take care to do so in a manner which cannot be construed as hostile. IFF must be checked for operation, radio communications should be established, definite prearranged altitudes and courses must be flown, and at night running lights must be turned on. A standard pattern for approach to the objective area should be established for transient, strike, and other aircraft.

USE OF RADAR.

15. Standard surface and air search radars have limitations which make early warning of approach of small groups of suicide planes difficult to obtain, particularly near large land masses, and in bays, gulfs or harbors. The presence of own planes in the area, particularly if they are split into many groups, makes it extremely difficult to keep track of all groups and it is therefore possible for a few enemy aircraft to get close to the target undetected. Low flying planes and planes approaching over land are often visually sighted before air search radars detect them. Surface search radars, employed with proper technique, are a valuable adjunct in detecting low flying aircraft. The SP radar recently introduced has very good possibilities for improved detection of low flying planes and is invaluable in fighter direction. Skillful use of the SP radar is the best known means of bringing day and night fighters quickly into position near the bandit, set for a kill.

RADAR COUNTER MEASURES.

16. RCM intercept equipment has proved valuable in warning of presence of enemy radar, airborne or shore based. However, it is not believed that suicide planes will be radar equipped. An escort plane might, but no evidence of such use is known. Radar jammers may render difficult the use of enemy airborne radar within 15 miles of own ships.

RADAR PICKETS.

17. A ring of radar pickets around the objective, thickest in the directions of probable approach, and not less than 40 miles and preferably about 60 miles from transport areas, appears to be the most reliable means of early warning. These ships should preferably be equipped for fighter direction. At the same time this ring supplies the best means of bringing our own fighters into contact with enemy aircraft in sufficient time to permit successful interception. Radar pickets should be about 20 miles apart for good coverage. If sufficient pickets are available, it is preferable for the picket line to be moved out rather than for the pickets to be stationed closer together.

18. Small ships with a good 40mm AA battery, such as LCS(L)(3), should be stationed near the picket destroyers. This serves several purposes:

(a) Adds gunpower and diverts attention.

(b) Improves visual detection of enemy aircraft and small surface craft.

(c) Improves ability to detect small enemy surface craft at night.

19. Improved radar and visual coverage combined with reliable communications are the best means of receiving early warning in order to put the CAP in contact with the enemy.

LOOKOUTS.

20. Suicide planes have emphasized the importance of lookout technique because they take advantage of every radar limitation and deficiency. The following points must be stressed:

(a) The lookout must realize his importance. He must be inoculated with the desire to do a good job.

(b) Lookouts should receive daily recognition training.

(c) Lookouts must be required to confine their attention to assigned sectors, even during attacks; not neglecting the astern sector, and not to indulge in sight-seeing or day-dreaming.

FIRE POWER

21. Fire Power depends on:

(a) Equipment. Every effort must be made to increase its quantity and quality as well as to maintain its condition.

(b) Training. Every opportunity to fire should be grasped. There is a tendency, however, to waste such opportunities by insufficient non-firing training. Much can be accomplished with improvised equipment, dry runs, etc.

(c) Fire Distribution. This involves distribution of targets to ships of a formation as well as to guns of a single ship. The tendency is for everyone to fire at a single target, allowing others to approach unnoticed. No easy solution of this problem exists. Each ship and group should work out a system based on its own peculiarities and enforce this system.

(d) Discipline. Gun crews must stick to their posts despite close approach of bandits. Fire must be continually poured into the plane until it hits the water. Well trained crews have shown a magnificent performance in this respect, continuing their fire until the attacker was splashed alongside. Ships must not fire indescriminately.

(e) Unmasking the battery. Fire may be increased by choosing a course on which all guns on a side will bear on the target. If possible, a formation should be chosen that will permit independent maneuvering of this sort for a short period of time. It should also provide the maximum clear area of fire for all ships without the range being fouled by friendly ships. The circular formation is most advantageous in this respect.

VT FUZES (ALSO KNOWN AS "INFLUENCE FUZES").

22. VT Fuzes are extremely effective against suicide planes. Their limitation is their arming distance, (800 yards minimum) and difficulty of getting the 5" gun aimed at the target and loaded quickly enough. Training should be aimed at reducing this time and increasing local control effectiveness.

MANEUVERING.

23. Evasive maneuvers of surface craft are relatively ineffective against the suicide attack as compared with their effectiveness against the more conventional forms of air attack. This is particularly true against the low flying suicider. Evasive action is, however, effective for a small unit against the suicider coming in from high altitude in a steep dive, provided he is detected soon enough and the unit can be turned violently in the direction of the attack with rapid acceleration and high speed.

24. The best solution is to shoot the enemy down before he crashes his target. It is therefore most important that formations and dispositions be selected to provide the maximum fire power against the attacker. This will require that the unit be maneuvered to keep the suicider within a bearing 45 degrees either side of the beam of the maximum number of ships.

If in a compound formation, consideration should be given to forming on a line of bearing normal to the direction of the expected attack and preferably, when practicable, cruise in a circular disposition.

25. The primary duty of the screen is to protect the unit screened; therefore it must maintain approximately the same speed, and maneuver with the unit screened. The screen should be stationed for suicide or any type of air attack in accordance with USF 10A, Article 3221.

26. All units should exploit fire power, maneuverability and speed. In the case of high speed units where conditions permit, rapid acceleration should be made from a speed of at least twenty knots.

USE OF SEARCHLIGHTS.

27. Searchlights are of doubtful value in countering this type of attack. Ships equipped with remote control type of searchlight where no exposed personnel are required may, for experimental purposes, use searchlights during daylight at the objective unless otherwise directed.

SMOKE.

28. The determining factor of whether or not to use smoke as a protective measure against suicide attacks, as well as against orthodox enemy air attacks, is whether or not the concealment of ships from enemy planes is sufficient to warrant the reduced efficiency of our AA fire. If ships are only partially covered with smoke or if only some of the ships are covered, the use of smoke is not warranted. The following principles are based on the above:

(a) Do not use smoke at sea, day or night.

(b) Use smoke to cover an anchorage or transport area at night but not during the day.

(c) The decision to use smoke to cover an anchorage or transport area during low visibility, morning or evening twilight, should be governed by whether or not the ships can be effectively hidden from view of enemy planes. If planes can see the ships or make out their outlines through the smoke, smoke should not be used.

PASSIVE DEFENSE.

29. The following steps should be taken during air attacks to reduce casualties to personnel:

(a) Allow only those personnel essential for manning battle stations to remain in exposed positions.

The spectator always gets hurt.

(b) Do not allow large numbers of personnel to congregate in one area.

(c) Require all personnel to wear a complete uniform with sleeves rolled down and collars buttoned. Cover hands, face, and other exposed parts of the body with flash burn protective cream or protective clothing.

(d) Require all personnel to wear helmets.

(e) Personnel whose duties permit should lie in a prone position, stomach down.

FIRE FIGHTING.

30. One of the chief dangers from suicide crashes is serious fire resulting therefrom on board ship. The following steps will reduce this menace:

(a) Fire fighting equipment should be dispersed and some be available for immediate topside use. Numerous short lengths of hose are more useful than long hoses.

(b) Frequent realistic fire drill and thorough indoctrination of fire parties.

(c) Removal from aboard ship of all unnecessary inflammable equipment. Inflammable material such as clothing and paper files remaining aboard ship should be stowed in metal containers.

(d) Oil and other highly inflammable materials stowed topside should be jettisonable.

R. K. TURNER.

AUTHENTICATED:

W. C. MOTT,
Commander, USNR,
Flag Secretary.

DD546/
Serial 163
Sh

C-O-P-Y

U.S.S. BROWN (DD 546)

2 May 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commanding Officer
To: The Commander Amphibious Forces Pacific Fleet(CTF 51).
Via: The Commander Destroyer Squadron Sixty-Three(CTG 51.5).

Subject: Formation and procedure used on Radar Picket stations - Recommendations for.

Reference: (a) U.S.F. 10-A.

Enclosure: (A) Sketch of Recommended Formations.

1. During almost one month of radar picket duty the commanding officer has found the following formation and measures effective for routine patrol and defense against enemy air attacks, and recommends them for use by commanding officers or officers in tactical command in radar picket stations.

2. Formation - For routine patrol, use formation known as "AF", with senior landing craft guide, other landing craft formed in stations as follows: 135°T distance 1500 yards, 225°T distance 1500 yards, 180°T distance 2100 yards, all bearings and distances from the guide. Destroyers acting as radar pickets and destroyers acting as support vessels form as follows where only one destroyer is present, patrol station ahead of formation to afford anti-submarine protection for all and to maintain good maneuvering speed. Where two destroyers are present they should form in a regular two ship anti-submarine screen as laid down in reference (a), i.e., with distance 1500 to 3000 yards from leading ship of formation depending on proximity of nearest air threat. Stations of destroyers should be taken with reference to the leading ship of the landing craft formation, which in turn depends upon the courses being steered.

3. Courses and speeds.- During routine patrols steam on North, West, South and East or other selected courses that will best cover the patrol station. Landing craft execute changes promptly every 30 minutes, or other selected time intervals, by simultaneous turns, without signal. Destroyers re-orient five minutes before each scheduled course change. Steam at speed 10 knots or best speed of which slowest vessel is capable. Officer in tactical command make flag hoist signal from time to time to adjust navigational position.

4. Maneuvers.- In event of air threat destroyers maneuver at high speed closing landing craft to obtain maximum support from them and form quarter echelon, distance 1000 yards, rear destroyer swinging to the side that will best unmask batteries, and following movements of O.T.C. O.T.C. of landing craft maneuver his unit by simultaneous turns to bring maximum battery to bear and render maximum support. It is important that landing craft maintain square or circular formation during attack in order to maintain equal fire power on all sides. O.T.C. should maneuver destroyers so as to interpose support craft between them and the air threat.

1.

DD546/
Serial 163
Sh

C-O-P-Y

U.S.S. BROWN (DD 546)

2 May 1945

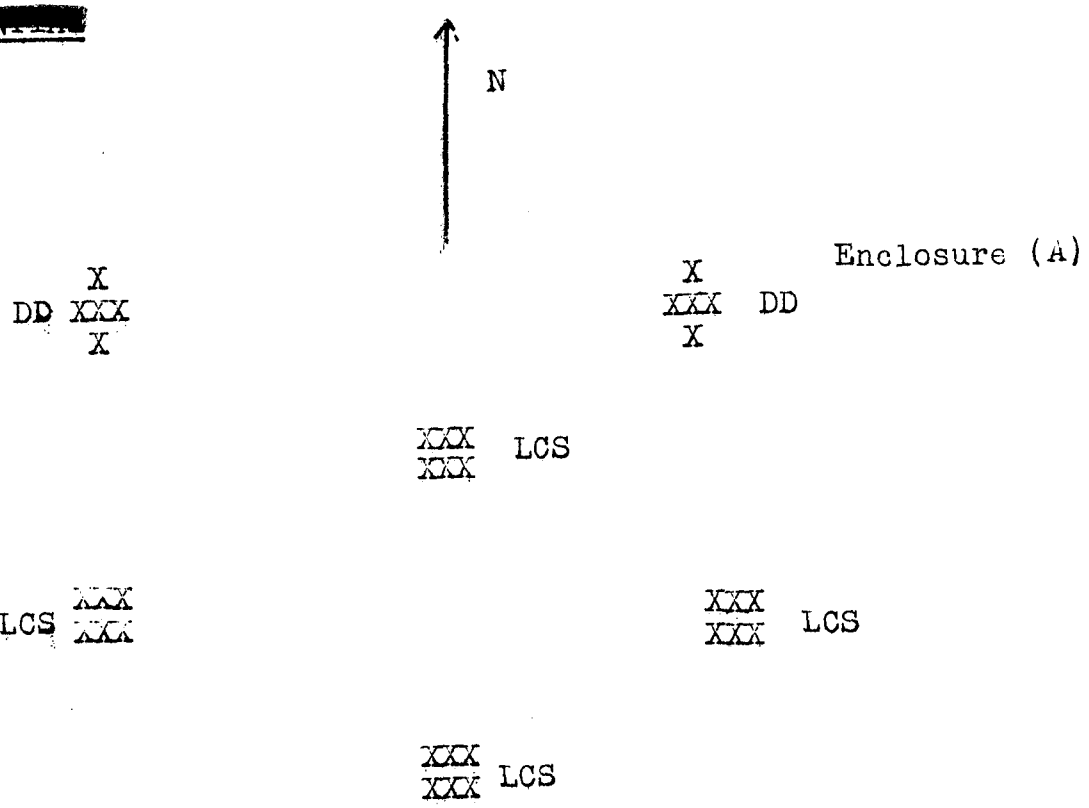
[redacted]

Subject: Formation and procedure used on Radar Picket stations- Recommendations for.

- -

5. During darkness with no moonlight it is recommended that formation use a two course patrol, reversing course every hour, all turning in the same direction, destroyers in re-orienting remaining on same geographical side of formation. Also, during darkness O.T.C. should open formation out to expand the square to a distance of 3000 yards on a side, in order to lessen possibility of collision. Formation "AF" should be taken automatically and immediately, without signal, in event of threat of air attack.

/s/ R. R. GRANHILL



Enclosure (A)

Recommended Formation with course North.

Enclosure (L)

DESTROYER SQUADRON TWO

A16-3
Serial 00505

10 May 1945.

[redacted]

From: Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.
To : Commander Task Group 51.15.
(Commander Amphibious Group SEVEN).
Subject: Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks.

Reference: (a). ComTaskGroup 51.15 visual despatch 070238 May.

Enclosures:
(A) CO, USS HUDSON ltr. A16-3, Serial 035 of 8 May 1945.
(B) CO, USS NEWCOMB ltr. A12-1, Serial 0027 of 8 May 1945.
(C) CO, USS HUTCHINS ltr. S78, Serial 021 of 8 May 1945.
(D) CO, USS LEUTZE ltr. A16-3, Serial 0086 of 8 May 1945.
(E) CO, USS HAGGARD ltr. A16, Serial 054 of 8 May 1945.
(F) CO, USS HARDING ltr. A16-3, Serial 072 of 9 May 1945.
(G) CO, USS TWIGGS ltr. A16-3, Serial 001-45 of 8 May 1945.
(H) CO, USS SHEA ltr. A16-1, Serial 00 of 9 May 1945.
(I) CO, USS RALPH TALBOT ltr. A16-3, Serial 042 of 8 May 1945.
(J) CO, USS DALY ltr. Serial 001 of 8 May 1945.
(K) CO, USS AARON WARD ltr. A9-8, Serial 021 of 9 May 1945.
(L) CO, USS INGRAHAM ltr. A5, Serial 073 of 8 May 1945.
(M) COMDESDIV ONE TWENTY ltr. A16-3, Serial 065 of 10 May 1945.
(N) CO, USS WITTER ltr. A12/A16-1, Serial 047 of 8 May 1945.

1. Enclosures are forwarded herewith.

2. The greater number of ships are in agreement on the following points:

4

(11)

A16-3
Serial 00505

10 May 1945

[redacted]

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks.

(a) The relative effectiveness of destroyer guns is, first, the five inch thirty eight, second the forty millimeter, and third the twenty millimeter.

(b) All twenty millimeter guns should be removed, and the equivalent weight and personnel used to increase the size of the forty millimeter battery.

(c) Because extensive use of torpedoes is no longer probable, most ships recommend removing the after torpedo mount on 2100 and 2200 ton destroyers, and mounting in its place a quad 40 millimeter mount.

(d) Ships agree that the Mk. 53 VT fuse is greatly superior to any other in combating suicide attacks.

(e) Speed should be increased to twenty knots when attack is imminent, and when it is developing the ship should accelerate to maximum speed possible. To this end, and when practicable, all boilers should be ke[redacted] ready to be cut in on the main lin[redacted] notice.

(f) A ship u[redacted] should not maneuver violently, but should change course an amount just sufficient to bring and keep the target on the beam, in order that the maximum number of guns can bear.

(g) When in company with other ships a close formation should be maintained in order to provide mutual fire support.

3. I have observed many suicider attacks, and have seen many misses caused by the high speed of the ship attacked while she steamed on a course normal to the bearing of the plane, provided it dived at an angle greater than 40 degrees. I believe that speed has little effect in avoiding low level glides or "on the deck" attacks. In both cases the maximum possible volume of fire on the beam is the best defense. Radical maneuvers seem to gain nothing, and tend only to handicap the gunners.

DESTROYER SQUADRON TWO

A16-3
Serial 00505

10 May 1945

[redacted]

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks.

4. I am definitely against any rule which specifies the range at which to open fire with the five inch battery. Although this range is usually stated as 12000 yards, it should be whatever it happens to be when a fair to good solution is obtained. However, this range should not be more than 12000 yards, and the gunners should not wait to open fire after it has decreased to 6000 yards. If fire is opened without first obtaining a solution, every bullet may be thrown away, and we lose the advantage of our excellent fire control systems. The gunnery officer should not be handicapped by any rule, for the Japs are smart: they may orbit at 12000 yards, then come in for an attack, knowing that this sudden change will upset the solution. In such a case it would be much better to let the Jap commit himself to the approach, then get a quick solution before opening fire.

5. It is suggested that gunnery schools and destroyers in training investigate more thoroughly the feasibility of putting part of the five inch battery in control of the forty millimeter directors for combatting multiple attacks or when such attacks are expected. VT projectiles should be used for this set-up.

6. Ships have not commented on tactics to be employed when slow landing craft are supporting destroyers. However, I have discussed this with many destroyer officers, and have come to certain conclusions. It seems next to impossible to maneuver, with sufficient smartness, a formation composed of these mixed types. I therefore recommend that, to provide mutual fire support, ships be placed in a close circular formation, destroyers about equally spaced, and that this formation be maintained unless the attack comes in the form of a high angle dive. In this event, the destroyer types should accelerate as rapidly as possible and pull out of the formation as may be necessary to bring the battery to bear. They may still be able to remain in mutual support with the remainder of the formation by circling it at high speed.

7. A circular formation may be maneuvered by emergency turn signals so as to bring the most number of guns to bear on the exposed flank. In order to avoid pocketing destroyer types by slower ships, as could easily happen when

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[redacted]

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks.

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all are headed in the same direction, probably a better maneuver would be for the whole formation to circle, or "chase tails", Thus a constantly changing target angle would be presented to the attacking planes, and the destroyers would not be obstructed if it should become desirable for them to break out of the circle at high speed. The foregoing maneuvers should be practiced daily until all ships in the formation attain a satisfactory degree of efficiency.

/s/ J. B. McLEAN.

DD475/A16-3

Serial: 035

U.S.S. HUDSON

% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
8 May 1945.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Suicide Planes - Defense Against.

1. It is believed that the best defense against suicide planes is first, efficient fighter direction, both indirect and visual; and, second, gunfire - five-inch and forty-millimeter.

2. Fighter direction has already accounted for a tremendous number of airplanes. In the case of this ship, thirty-three in a month have been knocked down by fighters, without a loss of our own. Most of these were splashed at least five miles away. However, frequently enemy suiciders approach at very low altitudes and are not detected until within ten miles. In this case visual fighter direction, I believe, is the best defense. Here our fighters can not be indirectly vectored with sufficient accuracy to their target. This must be done visually and if our planes can intercept they will splash a lot of the suiciders.

3. It is felt that the five-inch, using a high percentage of VT, and forty-millimeter guns are the best defense a destroyer has. At night a few rounds of white phosphorous for blinding effect is recommended. Twenty-millimeters are not the answer. It is felt that all twenties should be removed from destroyers and replaced where possible by forties. In addition, it is felt that quad forties, one on each side, should replace one torpedo mount on the 2100-Ton destroyer.

4. The opinions which have been repeatedly expressed - that the best maneuver against suicide attackers is to make maximum speed and present and keep a 90° or 270° target angle in order to bring the maximum number of guns to bear - is concurred with. Destroyers operating together should maneuver in loose column with the above general principle in mind.

5. The five-inch battery is the ship's most effective weapon. When planes approach on a zigzag course, the director pointer and trainer must track the mean course and not attempt to keep their cross wires constantly on the plane. Forty-millimeter guns can seriously damage an attacker but are not one-hundred percent effective. Twenty-millimeter will slow them down but not stop them.

/s/
R. R. PRATT

/A12-1(IEMoM:jar)
Serial 0027

U.S.S. NEWCOMB

[redacted]

care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California
8 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander Task Force FIFTY-ONE.

Subject: Suicide Attacks, Relative effectiveness of various weapons and maneuvers in countering.

Reference: (a) ComTaskFor Fifty-One secret despatch 060900 of May 1945.
(b) NEWCOMB Action Report for 6 April 1945, Serial 0018 of April 1945.

1. In accordance with reference (a) the following information on maneuvering during suicide air attacks is submitted. These opinions were originally expressed in reference (b) at Part VIII Lessons Learned, Conclusions and Recommendations: and Part IX Recommended Procedure for Preventing Jap Pilot from crashing into a Destroyer or other high speed ship.

"Part VIII: Lessons Learned, conclusions and recommendations.

A well coordinated, enemy suicide plane attack is more than a single destroyer is able to cope with. Every effort to maintain close formations must be made at dawn, dusk, and other times when plane attacks are imminent.

Ships in single stations, required by nature of employment, should control a CAP of at least four planes at all times during daylight hours, strengthened if possible at times of attack. The suggestion by another command (M.L. ABELE (DD733) that destroyers assigned to single patrol or radar picket duty have torpedo mounts removed and replaced by quad forty millimeter batteries is heartily concurred in.

Part IX: Recommended Procedure for Preventing Jap pilot from crashing into a destroyer or other high speed ship.

Normally the Jap has two methods of making his suicide attacks:

(a) Method No. 1.

Jap makes a steep dive from an altitude of about 10,000 feet and changes into a shallow glide at about 2000 yards range from the selected target. At this point the pilot definitely commits himself.

ENCLOSURE (B)

8 May 1945.

Subject: Suicide Attacks, Relative effectiveness of various weapons and maneuvers in countering.

Counter for Method No. 1.

The Commanding Officer must turn his ship in a direction to bring the maximum number of guns to bear on the target. He must use his engines to decrease the time required to bring the Jap on the beam. When the Jap is believed to have committed himself to the final glide the Commanding Officer should increase speed to emergency flank speed and should continue to keep the enemy plane on the beam. The increased speed will, in most cases, cause the enemy pilot to miss astern of his intended target. The Commanding Officer NEWCOMB has successfully avoided diving planes, making their approach as described above, on two occasions, one at Lingayen Gulf on January 6, 1945, and one off IE Shima on April 6, 1945. In the first case the plane missed the ship by 50 yards and in the second by 20 feet. The increased speed serves to destroy the setup for the enemy pilot. Since he is committed, he cannot effectively change his course. An analogy to this is seen in an automobile making 90 miles per hour down a highway. It is impossible to make a 90 degree turn in the automobile unless it is slowed down. Similarly it is impossible for the pilot to change his course enough to compensate for the burst of speed in the destroyer. On NEWCOMB there was an understanding between bridge and engineroom that when engine order telegraph was rung up 5 times on flank speed indicator, the engineroom knew that the Captain wanted all the speed available to avoid a suicide plane and quickly. The Commanding Officer is positive that this system saved his ship on two occasions.

(b) Method No. 2

Jap approaches fast and very low (25 to 50 feet off the water) and bores right into selected target.

Counter for Method No. 2.

Good gunnery and nothing else can save a ship from this type of attack. Even superb gunnery will probably not save the ship if the attack is made by two planes simultaneously one from each side.

The plane should be kept on the beam, of course, in order to bring a maximum number of guns to bear.

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Serial 0027 U.S.S. NEWCOMB

8 May 1945.

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Attacks, Relative effectiveness of various weapons and maneuvers in countering.

Radical maneuvering will be of no avail in this type of attack since the pilot can compensate for any such maneuver by a light touch of his stick.

For Both Method No. 1 and Method No. 2.

Keeping Jap plane on beam has additional advantage of smaller own ship presentment as a target area to be crashed. If the bow or stern is presented to the suicide diver he may skid along the entire length of the ship with resulting huge personnel casualties. With beam presentment, the area likely to be effected is cut to a minimum.

2. Relative effectiveness of various batteries is also discussed in reference (b). It is the strong opinion of the Commanding Officer that the 5"/38 battery is very effective using a 4 to 1 ratio of VT to AA common projectiles. That the forty millimeter battery is fairly effective; that the twenty millimeter battery alone will not prevent an attacking plane from making good his attack. The opinion of NEWCOMB gunnery officer is given in reference (b) and is thoroughly concurred in by the Commanding Officer.

"Lessons I have learned in witnessing seventy-five Japanese suicide attacks, twenty of which were hits:

1. Fire power of one destroyer is insufficient to cope with a large, well coordinated attack.
2. The local control methods are not flexible enough for fast developing attacks. A gun Captain's slew sight is needed on all mounts.
3. Victor Tare (Mk 32) projectiles are inferior to Mk. 53 types.
4. A ratio of VT to AA common projectiles should be 4 to 1.
5. A good 5"/38 tracer is lacking and seriously needed.
6. A 40mm with a set fuze similar to the Japanese 40mm Vickers, provided with a Mark 63 director, sounds like a good idea to use in combating suicide attacks.
7. A four plane Combat Air Patrol is a minimum requirement for singly operating destroyers
8. A suicide plane that gets within 2000 yds. has a five to one chance of crashing aboard or making a near miss.

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A12-1
Serial 0027

U.S.S. NEWCOMB

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Attacks, Relative effectiveness of various weapons and maneuvers in countering.

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9. Keep shooting.

/s/ I. E. McMILLIAN.

Copy to:
CDS2
CDS56
CTF54

DD476/S78
Serial: (021)

U.S.S. HUTCHINS
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.,
8 May, 1945.

[redacted]

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

SUBJECT: Suicide planes, opinions on effectiveness of weapons and defensive maneuvers against.

Reference: (a) CD6-2 dispatch 070525.

1. The Commanding Officer has witnessed at least twelve suicide hits at close range and has seen an equal number of attacks successfully repulsed. Numerous other attacks have been seen but many were seen after the ship involved had been hit and was afire.

2. Most attacks were torpedo type runs low off the water coming in abeam or head on bow or stern attacks. The latter type appeared more successful due to fewer guns bearing and did great damage to the ships involved.

3. Without any doubt the Commanding Officer considers the 5" gun using the Mark 53 VT projectile as the most effective weapon against suicide planes. At ranges of 7000 to 3000 yards the 5" guns splashed a considerable number of planes. Against very low flying planes the value of the VT fused projectile is questionable and a great number of prematures were observed. At altitudes of over 100 feet the prematures were definitely in a minority. At close range the 40 MM gun excelled and several planes have been witnessed splashed close aboard to ships by this weapon. Although the Commanding Officer has no basis of proof for his opinion other than conjecture and witnessing the terrific amount of punishment planes took from large caliber weapons, it is his considered opinion that the 20 MM gun is of negligible value against suicide planes. Although the gun may score many hits at close range, it does not destroy the plane in time to prevent a suicide crash. Destroyers could well do without this gun and substitute an equal weight of 40 MM guns and ammunition and still have a greater battery of effective armament. In the 2100 ton class it is again suggested that torpedo mount #2 be removed and a 40 MM quadruple mount or two twins be substituted. Destroyers urgently need more AA defense of heavy caliber. It is further recommended that the three 20 MM guns on the fantail be removed and a twin 40 MM substituted. 20 MM guns #1, 2, 3, and 4 could also be removed along with the excessive allowance of 20 MM ammunition and ready service boxes if weight consideration prohibit carrying out this suggestion.

DD476/S78
Serial: (021)

U.S.S. HUTCHINS
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.,
8 May 1945.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

SUBJECT: Suicide planes, opinions on effectiveness of weapons and defensive maneuvers against.

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4. The Commanding Officer has discussed evasive maneuvers with several other Commanding Officers who have been hit by suiciders and it is generally agreed that the best possible maneuver is to make the maximum speed and attempt to keep the plane abeam where the maximum number of guns can bear. This maneuver has the advantage of (1) giving the suicider a full deflection shot with a fair possibility of a miss (2) If hit, the plane is liable to slide off with small damage (3) small raking damage will be done with considerably less loss of personnel.

A. R. OLSEN.

DD481/A16-3
Serial 0086

U.S.S. LEUTZE (DD481)

/mrp

8 May 1945

[redacted]

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander Task Force FIFTY-ONE (Commander Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet).
Via : The Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR (Commander Battleship Squadron ONE).

Subject: Suicide Attacks - Combatting of.

Reference: (a) Commander Task Force FIFTY-ONE secret despatch NR 1 699 060900 of May 1945.
(b) Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR confidential despatch NR L 744 061420 of May 1945.

1. In compliance with reference (a) the opinions of this command regarding relative effectiveness of various weapons and maneuvers against suicide planes follow:

2. This vessel has had long experience with this form of attack, having had to combat it since the days of its inception as Jap combat doctrine in the Philippine campaign to the present time, and has determined from observation that the most effective measure is concentrated, accurate anti-aircraft fire of sufficiently heavy caliber to completely destroy the plane before it can reach a target. In this respect the firepower of a destroyer is inadequate if more than one plane attacks at a time; and if this form of attack is expected in strength, destroyers should be concentrated for mutual support. The most effective weapon is the 5"/38 gun battery with Mk. 37 director control and using a high percentage (at least 60%) influence fuzed projectiles. Fire should be opened at between 12,000 and 10,000 yards range. The 40mm is also a very effective weapon, but the present method of control limits its effectiveness; Mk. 51 directors should be replaced at the earliest possible date with Mk. 63 directors, and centralized control. This would double the effective range of the 40mm battery and would insure bringing them down at a safe distance. The 20mm battery is ineffectual in combatting this type of attack because of its short effective range. It is the opinion of this command that the 20mm battery should be removed; it is not worth the weight, space, and manpower it requires. Present gun control doctrine is good; in training, emphasis should be placed on target; designation drill, and the importance of sector responsibility in a concerted attack. The importance of many well-trained visual lookouts can not be over-estimated; suiciders have a nasty habit of coming in undetected. Recognition training for all hands is of utmost importance.

15

ENCLOSURE (D)

DD481/A16-3
Serial 0086

U.S.S. LEUTZE (DD481)

[redacted]

8 May 1945.

Subject: Suicide Attacks - Combatting of.

3. The most effective maneuver, when under attack, is to bring the suicider on the beam and increase speed to maximum; thereby bring the maximum number of guns to bear and making the ship a full deflection target for the attacker. A turn away when the suicider is in to short range (2,000) may be of value in throwing the suicider off in his aim; however, the turn should not prevent all the guns from bearing to the end.

4. It appears that the suicide attack is here to stay and will probably be the only effective Japanese weapon our naval forces will have to contend with in the future. It, therefore, behooves us to alter our ships accordingly, and in this respect the following recommendations are submitted regarding the armament of 2100 ton destroyers:

(a) Remove the after torpedo mount and replace the amidships 40mm twins with 40mm quads.

(b) Remove all 20mm guns and by this saving in weight make possible the replacement of the after 40mm twin with a 40mm quad.

(c) Remove the 36" searchlight from their present location extend the platfrom, and use them to mount a centralized 40mm control, keeping the present Mk. 51 directors for a secondary means of control. Remount one centerline 36" searchlight on a platform forward of #2 stack as in the 2200 ton destroyer.

/s/ L. GRABOWSKY.

Copy to:
ComDesRon 2
ComDesRon 56
CTU 54.1.5 (ComCruDiv 5).

A16
Serial (054)

U.S.S. HAGGARD

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 May 1945.

From: Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Destroyer Squadron Two.

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Planes - Opinions Concerning.

Reference: (a) Comdesron 2 Despatch 070525 of May 1945.
(b) USS HAGGARD letter S28, serial (043) of 1 April 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Copy of reference (b).

1. The suggestions, recommendations and opinions concerning ship defense against suicide planes expressed herein are based on observations made as follows: On 1 November 1944 in Leyte Gulf when attacked by one suicide plane which made a near miss; on 19 March 1945 when in the close screen of Task Group 58.4 and several carriers were attacked by suicide planes; on 29 April 1945 when on picket station of Task Group 58.4 in company with U.S.S. UHLMANN and attacked by two suicide planes, one of which struck this vessel, and the other of which made a near miss.

2. It is considered that effective defense against suicide planes must be based on two different types of attack. The first type is that of a high altitude, steep dive attack which hereafter will be referred to as the "A" type. There seems to be basis for belief and logic supports the theory, that on clear, bright, days at sea and clear of land masses the Japs favor this type of attack from out of the sun or cloud cover. The second type is that of a low altitude, shallow glide attack in which poor visibility and the short range of initial radar contact is used to the enemy's advantage. This type of attack will hereafter be referred to as the "B" type.

3. In both types of attack the primary means of defense is considered early opening of fire, and maintenance of maximum fire by the ship being attacked until the plane is down regardless of all other factors. (Regardless of friendly planes or friendly ships in the vicinity, strafing by the attacking plane, or the apparent inevitability of the plane's hitting when he gets close. Many friendly planes and friendly ships have been hit by our own AA, and this of course is regrettable, but if a suicide plane hits he kills more men and does more damage than done by our own AA.).

4. The second most important means of defense against the "A" type attack is considered to be maximum speed and the most radical maneuvers.

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A16
Serial (054)

U.S.S. HAGGARD

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

[redacted]

8 May 1945.

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Planes - Opinions Concerning.

5. The second most important means of defense against the "B" type attack is considered to be smoke. This is based on the opinion that the high speed shallow dive plane retains a good degree of maneuverability and the effect of own ship's speed and maneuvers is largely ineffective.

6. The main factor in early opening of fire is defense against surprise. Such defense it is believed should consist of the following:

(a) When bogies in the area, all 5 inch guns "half loaded" (powder and projectile in tray) with influence fuzed projectiles and placed in "dive attack sectors" (elevated 45°, each gun trained in center of own sector).
(b) Computer set up (time motor off) with Target Angle zero; range 2000 yds., target speed 275 knots (or other logical set up.)
(c) All gun crews and lookouts trained in sector responsibility and all Gun Captains authorized to open fire on own initiative.
(d) Each ship be equipped with "remote control slewing sights" located at advantageous points about ship (one on each wing of bridge; one at flying bridge) so that first person seeing plane can slew director on target. (See enclosure (A).)
(e) Command "Dive Attack, Sector _____" to be a command including "Action Port (Stbd)"; "Commence Tracking", "Commence Firing".
(f) Open fire on all unidentified aircraft coming within range if in any manner menacing.
(g) When plane is shot down, or if ship hit, or cease firing ordered, all gun crews immediately resume sector responsibility, and expect further attack.

7. Opinion of this command concerning effectiveness of our various weapons against suicide planes is as follows:

5"/38 Cal. battery	-	most effective.
40 MM battery	-	very effective.
20 MM battery	-	effective only for harassing effect and in case of hits that are lucky in their point of impact.
MK 16 fuzed projectiles	-	effective and of great use at long range.

A16
Serial (054)

U.S.S. HAGGARD

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE,
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

C[redacted]

8 May 1945.

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Planes - Opinions Concerning

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MK 32 Fuzed projectiles	-	effective but too unreliable.
MK 53 Fuzed projectiles	-	not known.

/s/
V. J. SOBALLE.

ENCLOSURE (E)

S28
Serial (043)

U.S.S. HAGGARD

c/o FLEET POST OFFICE,
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

[redacted]

1 April 1945.

From: Commanding Officer.
To : The Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance.

Via : (1) Commander Destroyer Division 94.
(2) Commander Destroyer Squadron 47.
(3) Commander Destroyers, Pacific Fleet.
(4) Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Visual Target Designation System - Recommendation for.

1. It has been rather forcibly brought to the attention of this command in numerous AA exercises, sightings of enemy aircraft, and on one occasion in the sighting of an enemy submarine on the surface, that the present method of target designation of visual targets in use on our ships is slow and therefore inadequate. This is in contrast to our methods of target designation of radar targets now in use which is considered highly satisfactory.

2. As a means of greatly improving our target designation of visual targets to MK 37 director, the following installation is submitted for consideration and recommended for adoption:

(a) Revise the present electrical connections between the presently installed MK 1 Slewing Sight and the train and elevation motors of the MK 37 director to pass through a multiple selector switch.
(b) Install additional MK 1 Slewing Sights in various advantageous positions about the ship, each additional Slewing Sight being complete with synchro transmitters and power supply, and electrically connected to the multiple selector switch in the director. Suggested locations for these additional or remote Slewing Sights for this type vessel in: (1) one on either wing of the bridge for use of the Commanding Officer or Officer-of-the-Deck. (2) one on the center line forward on the flying bridge for use of the Recognition or Sky Defense Officer.
(c) As targets were then sighted the order could be given to the Control Officer to shift his selector switch to Slewing Sight No. 1, 2, or 3 (or to starboard bridge, port bridge or flying bridge) and the designated Slewing Sight could then be used to put the director on the target. As soon as director was on target, the Control Officer could turn his selector switch off, thereby taking control away from the remote Slewing Sight and shifting to normal control.

Enclosure A.

S28
Serial (043)

U.S.S. HAGGARD

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE,
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 April 1945.

Subject: Visual Target Designation System - Recommendation for.

(d) Depending upon location of the remote Slewing Sights, an alignment adjustment between them and director might be necessary, but in most cases it is believed the error introduced would be small and alignment not required.

V. J. SOBALLE.

C O P Y

DMS28/A16-3
Serial: 072

U.S.S. HARDING(DMS28)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

[redacted]

9 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Effectiveness of Weapons and Maneuvers Against Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 dispatch 060900.
(b) CTS 2 dispatch 070525.

A. Weapons

1. .50 cal. and 20mm guns made repeated hits without apparent effect.

2. 40mm guns made hits and blew out chunks of the plane.

3. 5"/38 VT very effective but to knock the plane down it requires more than the one or two bursts as claimed by BuOrd.

4. 5"/38 mark 18 requires an extremely accurate solution of the problem - something unobtainable on a maneuvering plane.

5. Accurate 40mm fire will knock down a suicider. More intensive target practice should be mandatory for all 40mm gun crews.

6. The essence of the problem is that the suicider is extremely difficult to deflect from his course. To accomplish this requires gunfire that will break up the plane. 5"/38 and 40mm will do it if accurate and in volume.

7. Increasing use is being made of coordinated attacks which simply overwhelms the gunpower of a ship. It seems that the only practical answer is more 40mm guns (with more pig iron in the bilges) and more intensive target practice.

8. Small craft, armed with only 20mm and 40mm have obtained signal success against suiciders. However, a point to be considered is that a small craft is a small target and who knows how many suiciders downed by them were simply because the plane missed the target.

B. Maneuviers

1. In all attacks use maximum practicable speed, not only to aid maneuvering but to add the deflections problem to the suicider's worries.

2. In a single plane attack keep the suicider on the beam for reasons given in previous literature.

ENCLOSURE (F)

USS H RDING(DMS28)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

DMS28/A16-3
Serial: 072

[redacted]

9 May 1945.

Subject: ffectiveness of Weapons and Maneuvers Against Suicide Planes.

3. In a multiple attack, maneuvers are not as effective because while you may improve your position on one plane you are reducing it on another. In addition, turning may require a gun to cease fire and shift to another plane, thereby losing valuable seconds.

4. Turns (in a multiple attack) should be made where possible to prevent planes from coming in ahead or astern.

/s/ D.B. RAVAGE

DD591/A16-3
Serial: 001-45

U.S.S. TWIGGS (DD 591)
Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

[redacted]

8 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander Task Force Fifty-Four.

Subject: Aircraft Suicide Attacks - Method of combatting.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Secret despatch 060900 May 1945.
(b) CTF 54 Conf. despatch 061420 May 1945.

1. In accordance with the requirements of references (a) and (b) the following comments regarding the methods of combatting the subject type attack are hereby submitted. These remarks apply only to the destroyer type considering the various conditions in which it may be employed.

(a) DESTROYER OPERATING SINGLY

If the employment of the ship permits, it is recommended that full boiler power be available.

When it appears that attack is to be, or may be, directed at the ship but the aircraft are at a comparatively great range, take a speed of about 20 knots. When the aircraft are just beyond maximum gun range, 10000 - 12000 yards, increase speed to about 25 knots. Maneuvers should be, if possible, as gentle as possible but with the idea of keeping the aircraft or the greater number of aircraft, as near the beam as possible. Maneuvers during this stage of the attack need not and should not be violent.

Open fire at as great a range as possible at which there is any reasonable expectancy of hitting, this range is probably 10000 - 12000 yards. Any maneuvers after firing has started should be toward the end of keeping the greatest threat as near the beam as possible so that it may be covered by 5 inch fire. The maneuvers should still be as gentle as consistent with doing the job and not upsetting the fire control solution.

In a coordinated attack lookouts or others should keep the area on each side of the major threat as well as the disengaged side under observation. At the break up, singles or pairs may break off with the idea of coming in from ahead and astern at the same time as the major threat approaches from near the beam. All aircraft should be under observation at all times, if possible. Machine gun fire should start at the maximum range of the weapon, maintained, until for one reason or another it is no longer necessary, and no aircraft shouldbe permitted to close unopposed.

ENCLOSURE (G)

DD951/A16-3
Serial: 001-45

U.S.S. TWIGGS (DD 591)
Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

SECRET

8 May 1945.

Subject: Aircraft Suicide Attacks - Method of combatting.

Violent maneuvers at full power disregarding the possible bad effect on 5 inch fire, are in order when the aircraft have committed themselves to attack, are fairly close, and are closing rapidly.

At all times each machine gun must have authority to take an attacking plane under fire.

(b) DESTROYERS IN PAIRS

If the destroyers operate together, as on a picket station where they are in mutual support, it is felt best protection can be had if the two ships are closely concentrated. Under these circumstances there is the problem of multiple targets and concentrated gunfire for the attacking aircraft to combat. The two ships can be handled as one and only a very small problem of coordinating action exists. Many destroyer officers argue that two ships in mutual support should be 1000 - 2000 yards or greater apart, each one to maneuver independently. The commanding officer of this vessel is in very positive disagreement with such an arrangement, believing that much of the value of mutual support is lost.

(c) NIGHT

Normally this problem is not as great as the daytime problem because the threat of coordinated attack is less and the problem of keeping the target on the beam is simplified. Lower ship speeds are desirable, as a rule, until it becomes apparent that the aircraft is taking position for attack and even then the speeds used to maneuver normally need not be as high as those used in the daytime. In the daytime the commanding officer absolutely must be on a wing or in the forward conning station to get the picture of the development of the attack. At night in this vessel the commanding officer is usually in the pilot house on the command telephone circuit with a headset. Over this circuit he receives, among other things, the target angle, speed, altitude, range, etc. from plot. This information coupled with the fact that a night suicider is usually low and can be seen on the SG and consequently the RPI on the bridge, give the commanding officer a much better true picture than he has in the daytime. Machine gun fire must be held until the target is visible to the director operators or gunners and, when they open up, usually burst firing is best because it is easier to keep the target in the sight.

DD591/A16-3
Serial: 001-45

U.S.S. TWIGGS (DD 591)
Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

[redacted]

8 May 1945.

Subject: Aircraft Suicide Attacks - Method of combatting.

(d) IN A SCREEN

Under these conditions it is felt that the destroyer should maneuver and fire in the same manner as in sub-paragraph (a) above to shoot down the attackers and prevent their hitting the ship; such maneuvers and fire consistent with performing the primary job of screening the larger ships. In this connection it is felt that in anti-aircraft screens the destroyers could very profitably be operated in pairs. Putting the destroyers on the same circle as the cruisers also has its advantages.

3. This vessel has no positive answer to the suicide attack aircraft but in the present state of comparison of ship to aircraft it appears that the following may be as near the answer as any:

1. Open fire early and keep the major threat as near the beam as possible.

2. Maneuver.

3. Use high speeds.

4. TAKE EVERY ATTACKING PLANE UNDER FIRE WITH SOME WEAPON EVEN IF IT IS ONLY A SINGLE 20 MM.

/s/
GEORGE PHILIP, Jr.

Copy to:
Comdesron 51
CTG 51.5
CTU 54.1.2
Comdesron 2

U.S.S. SHEA (DM30)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

DM30/A16-1
Serial 00

~~S E C R E T~~

9 May 1945.

From: Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Japanese Suicide Plane Attacks - Comments, Recommendations and Suggestions concerning.

Reference: (a) ComDesRon 2 visual despatch 070525 of 7 May 1945.

1. In accordance with reference (a), comments and suggestions relative to Jap suicide plane attacks are submitted herewith.

2. Although several suicide plane attacks have been attempted against the SHEA, none was successful. On 16 April, at about 0950 I, the SHEA, while enroute Radar Picket #1, was "jumped" by many Jap planes. Visibility was unlimited with cloudless sky, light breeze, and smooth sea. During the ten-minute interval, this vessel shot down six Japanese planes and assisted in shooting down a seventh, while being a witness to a suicide hit in the HARDING by the eighth Jap plane.

The Commanding Officer attributes the successes of 16 April to the following:

a. Alertness of all top-side personnel to possibility of attack at any minute (ship was at General Quarters).

b. Unlimited visibility permitting planes to be picked up visually at extreme ranges.

c. High-speed maneuvering at 30 knots on four boilers which enabled the SHEA to keep full battery bearing on most dangerous plane at any given instant.

d. Sector control of machine gun battery with no sight seers (commanding officer was continually reminding topside personnel to keep eyes in own sector and watch for planes coming from all altitudes and position angles.)

e. Apparent excellent efficiency of mark 53 5" fuzes.

f. Jap pilots did not appear to be good aviators and at times appeared to be uncertain as to their next best move.

27.

- -

g. All guns were firing at maximum rate at all times.

During these attacks of 16 April, the planes came from the North of Okinawa and appeared to be working in pairs. The first two pairs were shot down by merely shifting fire from first to second plane without checking fire - be careful for second and other planes following behind the lead plane. At least four of these planes made definite movements toward suicide on this ship - majority splashing outside 1,000 yards - last plane was splashed 250 yards starboard beam and reached this position only because he was temporarily hidden by main battery smoke while SHEA was shooting at the plane in front of him.

3. On 22 April during evening twilight and about 45 minutes after sunset, the SHEA had a near miss by a twin-engine Nick which crashed about 25 feet to port of Mount 2. This plane came from the west or southwest and had been under fire for about 15 minutes by various vessels of the transport screen before making suicide attempt on SHEA. SHEA was at the time stationed in Transport Screen Station B-37. This Japanese aviator was definitely on the "first team" and knew his job.

This Nick first appeared to be crossing astern from starboard to port at about 3,000 feet with range about 5,000 yards. Plane banked and started in on SHEA from starboard quarter at what appeared to be full throttle. The Nick was taken under fire at this time. The SHEA was accelerating rapidly with full right rudder and the Nick was in a full vertical bank when he passed over the SHEA with left (lower) wing missing bridge and Mount 2 by about ten feet. Plane appeared to be spraying gasoline as he passed over SHEA. Commanding Officer Attributes this miss to the following:

a. High speed acceleration and tight turn by SHEA.

b. Slight error in judgement by Jap pilot (possibly due to approaching darkness.

c. Apparent inability of Jap pilot to use reverse control while in vertical bank and increase dive angle of his plane.

d. Possibility that pilot was hit at close range (plane was smoking but not burning).

4. At 0859 on 4 May the SHEA was hard hit by a Japanese "BAKA" which entered starboard side of Sonar room, passed through the bridge superstructure, exploded just to port and slightly below main deck level. This "BAKA" was sighted a maximum of five seconds before it hit the SHEA. Damage and casualties extensive.

U.S.S. SHEA (DM30)

DM30/A16-1
Serial 00

9 May 1945.

Subject: Japanese Suicide Plane Attacks - comments, recommendations, and suggestions concerning.

- -

At the time of attack, SHEA was on Radar Picket #14 bearing 335°, distance 20 miles from Point Bolo. At 0800, the shifting smoke from Hagushi Beach area was so dense as to make it impossible to see all vessels on RP14 at ranges in excess of 3,000 yards. This smoke drifted and dissipated to the west and northwest so that by 0859 a light dusty haze remained to the northwest making visibility extremely poor, even though the day was bright and the sky was cloudless. The "BAKA" came out of this hazy smoke and the commanding officer regrets to report that for this reason only one 50 calibre and two 20mm opened fire prior to the hit. SHEA was making 25-30 knots with full right rudder at time of hit.

5. General comments.

a. One occasion the SHEA witnessed a Jap plane flying over Kerama Retto at altitude about 1200 feet and blinking running lights. TERROR opened fire with 40mm tracers, the plane banked immediately and appeared to fly down the tracers scoring a suicide hit in the TERROR. Except as a last resort, recommend tracers never be used to fire at Jap planes at night.

b. The Commanding Officer has the distinct impression that the best Jap fliers are now coming from the west and southwest (probably Formosa or China), and that many of the Jap pilots from the north are inexperienced in their art. This does not include "BAKA" pilots.

c. Night and twilight suicide attacks are believed to be the most dangerous and each commanding officer must give due consideration to slow speed with no wake or high speed maneuvering depending upon definite suicide action by the enemy.

d. Believe Japs will resort and have resorted to high altitude approaches for "BAKA" carrying planes.

e. The commanding officer considers that a plane in a straight suicide approach can be hit without difficulty with either one or all 5-inch, 40mm, or 20mm, if guns are brought to bear promptly and efficiently. This is the saving factor of the Jap suicide attack.

6. The commanding officer submits there are at present no known substitutes for:

a. Alertness of topside personnel in their own sector and with no sight seeing.

b. Maximum volume and rate of fire brought to bear on proper bearing.

29.

[redacted]

U.S.S. SHEA (DM30)

DM30/A16-1
Serial 00

9 May 1945

Subject: Japanese Suicide Plane Attacks - comments, recommendations, and suggestions concerning.

- -

c. High speed maneuvering to accomplish b. above and while attempting to throw the Jap pilot off balance during his approach.

/s/ C. C. KIRKPATRICK.

cc: ComInCh-Adv.
ComInch-Adm.
CTF 58
CTF 51
CoMinPac

A16-3/DD390
Serial 042
[redacted]

U.S.S. RALPH TALBOT (DD390)

8 May 1945

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander, Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Suicide Attacks - Comments on.

Reference: (a) Comdesron TWO despatch 070525 of May 1945.

1. This command highly recommends high speed and radical manoeuvers as the best defense against suicide plane attacks. These defensive policies are recommended even when heavy wakes may disclose presence of ship to the enemy.

2. The primary doctrine of bringing the maximum fire to bear on the enemy and continuing to shoot until the plane either is shot down orcrashes, is sound and should be followed at all times. It obviously falls short of an adequate defense where several attacks are made simultaneously, or where the attack is made in low visibility or at night and no radar solution has been obtained. Hence this policy should be combined with high speed and radical manoeuvers.

3. It is recommended that maximum speed consistent with the tactical situation be used. For destroyers on isolated stations, a minimum of twenty-five knots is recommended. One form of manoeuver which is recommended for consideration is a "weaving" using standard or a constant rudder, with course changes of 30° or 40° on either side of base course. This has the advantages of simplicity, ease of supervision by officer-of-the-deck or by helmsman alone, and making good a base course.

4. It is believed that high speeds and radical manoeuvers are frequently attempted too late to be of material defensive assistance. Present enemy tactics of coordinated attacks by groups of suiciders make it imperative that defensive tactics be adopted as soon as bogeys come within gun range.

W. S. BROWN

31.

ENCLOSURE (I)

File No.
DD519/woc
Serial 001.

[redacted]

U.S.S. DALY (DD519)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

8 May 1945

From: Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Opinions regarding defense against suicide attack.

Reference: (a) CDS 2 dispatch (070525) of May, 1945.

1. This ship was under coordinated attack by six (6) VALS on 28 April, 1945 while on radar picket station No. 2. Five attempted suicide dives or glides, the sixth was shot down by combat air patrol before he could start. The first three and the fifth were shot down while in glides before they reached the ship. The fourth, in a dive, was hit and burning before he passed over the stacks and crashed twenty-five yards on the port beam.

2. As a result of this action, the following opinions are submitted:

(a) The only way to make a suicider miss his mark is to hit him with sufficient gunfire to splash him or at least to cause the pilot to lose control.

(b) Maneuvers at highest available speed should always be such as to bring maximum number of guns to bear. It is felt that maneuvers to evade after the plane is within a thousand yards will only serve to decrease fire power, and is not recommended.

(c) Relative effectiveness of weapons is as follows:
1. Forty millimeter.
2. Five inch (V/T projectiles).
3. Twenty millimeter.

(d) In regard to V/T ammunition, the mark 53 fuze is far superior to any other thusfar seen, and is believed to have an increased effectiveness of at least fifty per-cent over mark 32 and mark 40.

R. R. BRADLEY, JR.

- -

ENCLOSURE (J)

DM34/A9-8
Serial: 021

U.S.S. AARON WARD (DM-34)
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California. 9 May 1945.

~~C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L~~

From: The Commanding Officer
To: The Commander, Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Japanese Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) Your Despatch 070525

1. In accordance with reference the following is submitted as a result of our experience in dealing with suicide enemy aircraft.

(a) The five inch battery is by far the most effective defense against the suicide attack; it can reach out far enough so that during the relatively long approach the chance of knocking down any one plane is very good. I believe that if fire is opened up early (on the five inch) and only one plane is coming in, the chances are better than even it will be destroyed before reaching the ship.

(b) The 40MM battery on the 2200 ton destroyer is capable of covering all four sectors rather well and they have given good account of themselves to date, but the range at which hits are probable is too close in to insure a very high percentage of splashes before the plane hits the ship. A quadrant control system as installed on this ship where there is a control (sky) officer for each 40MM and its adjacent 20's has shown itself to be in our estimation the only way of getting on the target early and producing results.

(c) The 20MM battery I do not consider sufficiently effective to be of much value. Most 20MM hits will not stop a plane or splash it in sufficient time to keep it from hitting the ship - Killing the pilot is of no value, he is going to die anyway. I believe that the weight involved might best be converted to 40MM guns to advantage.

(d) Rapid maneuvering I do not consider of any value except so as to swing the ship around so all guns will bear. The speed of the plane is so great compared to that of the ship that any minor change in course or accerleration will not throw the pilot off far enough to cause a miss. A speed of 20 or 25 knots is desirable in order to offer rapid turning when needed to get your guns on. This was brought home to us very clearly because on our big attack we lost steering control on the first hit and from then on the planes attempted to place us at a disadvantage and keep away from our four forward five inch guns.

(e) Did not try searchlight in the pilot's eyes idea, do not consider it anything but a good point of aim for him.

ENCLOSURE (K)

DM34/A9-8
Serial: 021

U.S.S. AARON WARD (DM-34)
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California.

9 May 1945.

[redacted]

Subject: Japanese Suicide Planes

2. The only defense as I see the problem is a terrific offense, and that mainly with the five inch far enough out so you have a chance to knock him down before he gets you. The 40's will help if you miss with the five inch, or they will be invaluable for a multiple attack. You can't dodge - you can only shoot

/s/ W. H. SANDERS, Jr.,

DD694/A5

U.S.S. INGRAHAM (DD 694)

073

San Francisco, California
8 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Defense against suicide Planes - Opinions and recommendations.

Reference: (a) ComDesRon Two Dispatch 070525 of May 1945.

1. In compliance with reference (a) the following opinions and recommendations are submitted for consideration. They are based upon lessons learned in many suicide attacks during the Philippine Campaign and in particular upon the experience of this command during the air attacks of 4 May 1945 made upon the INGRAHAM and vessels in company in Radar Picket Station #1.

(a) ARMAMENT

1. Recommend increase in automatic weapon batteries, reducing torpedo battery and depth charges as necessary to compensate for weight.
2. Investigate practicability of twin 20MM
3. Local battery control for 40MM and 20MM (sector control by gun captains) is essential against multiple attack.
4. Heavy volume of fire will discourage incoming planes and turn them away, but as soon as fire is directed to another target, original target will attack again.
5. Radar-controlled 5" just about useless in this type of attack when CAP has been drawn in. Can not fire long enough to get smooth solution without endangering CAP.
6. Second officer in director very useful for spotting and designating targets to control officer.

(b) MANEUVERS

1. Keep targets near the beam. Don't let them get ahead or astern. For a single target, last moment manouvers may help.
2. Violent manouvering against multiple coordinated attacks is ineffective and disturbs own gunners. Manouver only to unmask batteries and to keep targets from getting ahead or astern.

(L)

U.S.S. INGRAHAM (DD 694)

DD694/A5

073

San Francisco, Calif.
8 May 1945.

Subject: Defense against Suicide Planes - Opinions and recommendations.

(b) MANEUVERS (Con't)

3. If sea calm, high speed may help, but if at all rough would hinder own gunners. This vessel attempted to be accelerating from 2/3 to flank speed during attacks to present a changing deflection problem.
4. Vessels should stay in close formation for mutual support. This consideration is most important and outweighs the protection, if any, gained by high speed and radical maneuvers.

(c) GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Again, VIGILANT LOOKOUTS together with confident visual recognition are of paramount importance. This can not be stressed too much.
2. As melee develops and FD control becomes confused or is out of action, direct CAP by firing bursts in general direction of bogies, even though target may be well outside range of available armament.
3. All personnel except those at gun and control statio s take cover. It is especially important that all possible be cleared from bridge so that captain and automatic weapons control officer can have clear path at all times.
4. Keep stand-by boilers warmed up (300 to 600 psi). When general alarm is sounded bring them up to line pressure and have them ready to cut-in.

J.F. HARPER

OP7/120/A16-3
Serial: 065

COMMANDER DESTROYER DIVISION ONE-TWENTY
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 10 May 1945

From: Commander Destroyer Division ONE-TWENTY
To: Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks.

Reference: (a) Comdesron 2 visual dispatch #070525 of May 1945.

1. In compliance with reference (a) the following discussion is submitted.

2. It is believed that the problem of defense against single suicide plane attacks are fairly well understood and the tactics to be used against them generally agreed upon as follows:

(a) Alertness of competent lookouts to detect the approaching plane.

(b) Presenting beam to target in order to increase the plane's deflection problem, bring more guns to bear and take advantage of the plane's relative lack of control in range as compared with deflection. In this latter connection it has been noted that suicide planes frequently overshoot or fall short when approaching beam targets, but rarely do so when approaching from bow or stern.

(c) A formation of supporting ships which, while elastic enough to permit some maneuvering, is tight enough to furnish real fire support between ships. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that detached ships are favored and more vulnerable targets.

(d) Maneuvering and changing speed are helpful, but not of sufficient value to warrant getting away from the formation or preventing a head-on or stern-on target.

ENCLOSURE (M)

37

OP7-120/A16-3
Serial 065
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 10 May 1945

Subject: Defense Against Suicide Plane Attacks.

3. In the case of multiple suicide plane attacks the importance of the formation increases and the value of maneuvering is lost. A compact formation will permit some concentration by individual ships on targets in their own sectors, and maneuvering tends to confuse the gunners and decrease the accuracy of the fire. Against multiple coordinated attacks, quadrant control is believed to be absolutely essential. To be effective, quadrant control requires extreme alertness of lookouts, confident identification of planes and relatively little maneuvering of the ship. Heavy fire may turn away an approaching plane, but it must be remembered that as soon as fire is shifted to another plane the original target will come in again. Radar control of the 5-inch battery is practically useless when CAP has followed enemy planes in to close range.

4. Commander Destroyer Division 120 has witnessed more than twenty successful suicide plane attacks in the Philippines and around Okinawa, and has twice been on ships which were victims. On the last occasion, on Radar Picket Station One, the supporting ships claim having shot down sixteen planes by AA fire. It is believed that the formation used contributed materially to this score. All station units were stationed on circle one, the destroyers at 1090 and 1270, and the small ships (two in each station unit) at 1000 and 1180. After the fighter direction was gone, and the division flagship had been hit, 5-inch and 40MM bursts were used very effectively to direct the CAP to approaching enemy planes. It is believed that this technique saved the ship from being hit again by enabling the CAP to intercept and destroy numerous enemy planes before they got within range of the ship's remaining guns.

5. It is the opinion of this command that no unit of the fleet, with the possible exception of the new heavy ships, now has sufficient AA power to repel multiple coordinated suicide plane attacks. It is felt that some new weapon must be developed. It is suggested that a multiple rocket projector, using projectiles with VT fuzes, to be fired at a range of about 1500 yards after the plane has been committed to its final course, might be effective. If designed so that two or three salvos could be fired, it would be still more effective.

6. At this stage of the war it would seem advisable to reduce torpedo batteries and depth charges in order to permit an increase in AA fire power. Observation by this command indicates that 40MM is the most effective of the weapons presently available for defense against suicide attacks and that the 20MM is largely ineffectual in that regard. It also appears desirable to improve equipment for the local control of the 5-inch batteries so that each mount could be more effectively used in divided control against multiple targets.

J.C. ZAHM

DE636/A12/A16-[redacted]
Serial: 047

U.S.S. WITTER (DE636),
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California

6 May 1945.

C[redacted]

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.

Subject: Weapons and Maneuvers found effective against Enemy Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) ComDesRon 2 visual despatch number 070525 of May 1945.

1. In accordance with reference (a) the following report is submitted.

2. This command has observed four suicide attacks close aboard, two of which were upon this ship. From a study of these attacks, it is my opinion that the following maneuvers will prove the most effective for the situations described below.

(a) For all single suicide plane attacks, regardless of the method of approach - use maximum speed - keep plane on the beam where maximum fire power can be brought to bear.

(b) For a simultaneous attack by two suicide planes demanding you take both planes under fire - use maximum speed - place the more persistent plane on the beam leaving the other on the bow or quarter - split your battery, shifting all guns to remaining plane once one plane is shot down.

(c) This command has not observed an attack by more than two suicide planes.

The effectiveness of the above maneuvers depends upon two factors - one the caliber of the Jap pilot, and two your ability to hit the plane with gunfire. I have seen a suicide plane miss a ship steaming at 15 knots taking no evasive action, and I have seen a suicide plane hit a ship taking evasive action steaming at flank speed. The recommended maneuver is one which will bring the maximum number of guns to bear on the plane. From this point on, only the accuracy of your fire will keep him off.

3. The effectiveness of the various weapons observed in use, by this command, against the suicide attack is set forth below.

(a) 3"/50 Caliber - Although this gun accounted for one suicide plane shot down by this ship, the rate of fire, and speed of train of this gun leaves much to be desired.

DE636/A12/A16-1
Serial: 047

U.S.S. VITTER (DE636),
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

[redacted] 6 May 1945.

Subject: Weapons and Maneuvers found effective against Enemy Suicide Planes. (Cont'd)

(a) Cont'd)
Numerous bursts from the Mark 45 fuzed A.A. projectiles were observed in front of one suicide plane, and failed to stop him.

(b) 20 MM - This is a good gun, however numberous hits are required to stop a target. In the attacks I have witnessed, the 20MM has scored hits, but failed to bring the planes down in time.

(c) 1.10/75 Caliber - This also is a good gun, which requires numerous hits or a few in vital spots to bring a suicide plane down.

The effectiveness of the armament on this ship depends upon the volumn and accuracy of fire, and last and most important of all, the continuation of fire up to the time the plane splashes.- our most effective fire will come when the plane is close aboard. It is then we should rip him to pieces.

4. The inability to pick up attacking planes until they are close aboard limits the effectiveness of our AA battery during hours of darkness. Our best defense during such times is to hold fire unless the attacker is definitely diving on our ship.

GEORGE HERMANN, III.

COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON SIXTY THREE
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

CDS63/A16-3
Serial 0021

14 May 1945

[redacted]

From: Commander Task Group 51.5.
To: Commander Task Force 51.

Subject: Tactical Plans for Radar Picket Groups.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 despatch 081015 May.
(b) CTG 51.5 despatch 090030 May.
(c) DD662/A16-3 serial 00120 of 9 May, 1945, Tactical Plans for Radar Picket Groups - report of board consisting of Commander R. H. HOLMES, USN, and Lieutenant Commander J. B. CRESAP, USN.

1. Reference (c) is forwarded herewith.

2. The plans in general follow the concensus of opinion of commanding officers who have had radar picket duty.

3. The following comments are submitted:

(a) Under "General Remarks", the board recommends a distance of 1000 - 1500 yards between destroyers. In order to permit adequate mutual support the distance should be less than 1000 yards.

(b) Plan one, paragraph 3, first sentence.- In addition individual ships should adjust line of bearing as practicable to avoid blanking each others fire. The desired formation at any instant is column or quarter echelon with the line of bearing normal to the direction of the attack. Quarter echelon (to the left if attack is coming from the right) is preferred by some commanding officers in that it has been their experience that the attacking planes during the latter part of the approach attempt to maneuver so as to attack from the stern.

(c) Plan one, paragraph 4. - Some commanding officers recommend opening up with 40mm batteries when plane is at 7000 yards so as to have some bursts short of the target.

/s/ F. MOOSBRUGGER

U.S.S. BENNION (DD - 662)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Cal.

DD662/A16-3
Serial 00120
(RHH:gr)

[redacted]

From: Commander R.H. HOLMES, U.S. Navy.
Lieut.Comdr. J.B. CRESAP, U.S. Navy.

To : Commander Task Group FIFTY-ONE POINT FIVE.

Subject: Tactical Plans for Radar Picket Groups.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 despatch 081015 MAY.
(b) CTG 51.5 despatch 090030 MAY.

Enclosure: (A) General Remarks.
(B) Daylight Plan ONE.
(C) Daylight Plan TWO.
(D) Night Plan.

1. In compliance with references (a) and (b), Enclosures (A) through (D) are submitted for consideration.

/s/ R. H. HOLMES.

/s/ J. B. CRESAP.

~~SECRET~~

TACTICAL PLANS FOR RADAR PICKETS

GENERAL REMARKS

1. The following plans are based on four support craft of LCS type and two destroyers. In all plans concentration for mutual supporting fire is stressed. There is no cure all for a coordinated attack by numerous planes but two destroyers in close support (1000-1500 yards) are better able to take all planes under fire than two which are separated by a mile or more.

2. Although DDs are maneuvering independently when under direct attack the OTC should give his courses to other ship by TBS (or MN) for information as an aid in remaining concentrated. Instead of committing the destroyers to a specific course and speed this procedure allows each DD some leeway and at the same time facilitates maneuvering for mutual support and safety from collision.

ENCLOSURE (A) TO DD662/A16-3
SERIAL 00120 of 9 MAY 1945.

TACTICAL PLANS FOR RADAR PICKETS

PLAN ONE (Daylight)

Suitable for picket station in which direction of attack is probably known in advance, and in unfavorable weather.

1. LCS types in column at distance 500 yards. Speed 6 to 10 knots depending on prevailing weather conditions. Courses of LCS at right angles to expected direction of attack. Reverse course by turn movements in order to remain within prescribed five mile radar picket circle.

2. Destroyers in column at distance of 1000 yards, speed not less than 15 knots. Patrol on a parallel course to LCS 1500 yards on disengaged side reversing course by turn movements in order to remain always within 3000 yards of nearest LCS.

3. When threat of attack develops (i.e. bogies within 20 miles) formation maneuver by turn movements to keep target bearing on the beam. During attack ships must maneuver independently to bring maximum battery to bear. LCS conform in general to direction of destroyer movement and increase to maximum speed to prevent undue separation.

Destroyers use maximum speed after plane commits himself to attack, in order to gain advantage of rapid turning and acceleration.

4. The main b attery should open fire at 10,000 yards or as soon as a good solution is obtained and the 40mm and 20mm batteries as soon as plane is within maximum range. Keep firing as plane closes; the closer he is the better the chances of shooting him down are.

ENCLOSURE (B) TO DD662/A16-3
SERIAL 00120 of 9 MAY 1945.

[redacted]

TACTICAL PLANS FOR RADAR PICKETS

PLAN TWO (Daylight)

1. When the probable direction of attack is uncertain a diamond shaped formation of landing craft support vessels is recommended. The LCS are equally spaced on circle .5 with no ship in the center, but with one designated as guide. This formation would be maneuvered by turn movements to keep attacking aircraft on the beam. At least two and usually 3 of the LCS should be able to fire without being blocked off.

2. Destroyers steam about 1000 yards apart in column so that they remain 1500-3000 yards from the nearest small craft. This spacing is such that the destroyers can take advantage of their speed and have reasonable freedom of movement without too much risk of interference or collision. At the same time they can remain within mutual supporting distance of the support craft.

3. Paragraphs 3 and 4 of enclosure (B) are equally applicable to this plan.

4. During routine periods this formation can patrol on any convenient courses, small craft at 6 to 10 knots and DDs at 12 to 15 (or faster if desired). A standard patrol plan such as steaming in a square, half an hour on each leg, or on a given course and its reciprocal is generally acceptable. Weather and currents, or conditions for radar navigation will influence the choice of courses to be steered.

5. If only three LCS are present a formation in the shape of an equilateral triangle, each ship 600 yards apart is recommended. The previous paragraphs concerning maneuvers are applicable here also. If only two LCS are on station they should stay in column.

SECRET

TACTICAL PLANS FOR RADAR PICKETS

PLAN THREE (Night)

1. At night during periods of bright moonlight use day plans one or two except use double distance between DD's and LCS formation. Distance between ships of each group same as in daylight. Use column movements for reversal of course to reduce danger of collision.

2. On cloudy nights or nights of little moonlight DD types and LCS types patrol independently on approximately parallel courses about 3-4 miles apart. If any land is in the vicinity the LCS should be interposed between the destroyers and land as protection against suicide surface craft and PT boats, also to detect and destroy any barge traffic.

LCS may open to 1000 yards distance between ships if desired but destroyers should remain at 1000 to 1500 yards distance. Destroyers may reduce speed to 12 knots to reduce wake visibility but any reduction in wake visibility at speeds of less than 12 knots is more than offset by the loss in maneuverability.

3. Under night attack the destroyers should maneuver as a unit under the OTC to reduce danger of collision and to maintain concentration. Speed should not be increased as early in daylight attacks because of wake visibility. However high acceleration and evasion as the attack is pressed home at night will probably be even more effective than during daylight as the plane will have more difficulty in detecting the movements of the ship.

4. In case of a multiple plane attack at night, altitude less than 5000; open fire at 8000 yards. If only a single plane is attacking fire may be held up until 6000 yards with more chance of splashing the plane due to a better solution. Do not open fire at planes above 7000 feet altitude as a general rule. 40mm using tracers should only be used if plane can be seen by gun pointers or Mk. 51 director operators. 40mm guns using non tracer ammunition may be used under main battery control but it is felt that the possible advantages of more than one mount firing in this manner are offset by the additional flash visibility.

ENCLOSURE (D) TO DD662/A16-3
SERIAL 00120 of 9 MAY 1945.

AS
0097

L/re

May 15 1945.

SECRET

From: Commander Task Group 51.15 (Commander Amphibious Group SEVEN).
To : Commander Task Force 51 (Commander Amphibious Forces, U. S. Pacific Fleet).

Subject: Defense against Suicide Plane Attacks.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 despatch 060900.

Enclosure: (A) ComDesRon TWO ltr., serial 00505, same subject, of 10 May 1945.
(B) CTU 52.9.5. (ComLCIFlot 6) ltr. serial P186, same subject, of 11 May 1945.
(C) CTG 51.20 ltr., serial 0114, same subject, of 11 May 1945.

1. The following information is submitted in compliance with reference (a). This correlated data is based on enclosures (A), (B), and (C), and on the ruesults of interrogation of Commanding Officers and others attached to forty-two ships attacked by suicide planes over the past six weeks.

2. (a) Reasons:

The 5-inch thirty-eight is considered the most effective weapon against suicide planes. The 40 MM guns are also known to have been responsible for a great many kills, especially against planes coming in low over the water and against coordinated attacks from several directions. The 20 MM gun has proved considerabely less effective than the other two and there is scant evidence that they have in themselves destroyed suicide planes. It has been recommended in the case of picket destroyers especially, that their armament of 40 MM guns be increased by removing torpedo tubes, and also by substituting forties for twenties to the extent possible.

(b) Ammunition:

There is common agreement that VT (Mark 53) projectiles are the most effective against this type of attack and their use in quantities up to a ratio of 4 for 1 has been recommended. Their value against very low-flying planes is somewhat limited however, due to frequent premature detonations.

ENCLOSURE (O)

~~S E C R E T~~

Subject: Defense against Suicide Plane Attacks

(c) Firing Procedure:

There is no substitute for the maintenance of a continuous heavy volume of accurate AA until the last possible second. A great many suiciders have been diverted or splashed close aboard by last minute hits. It is highly desirable to open fire at advance ranges up to 10,000 to 12,000 yards if a reasonably good solution can be obtained. The pilot will be disconcerted and a longer time will be available to make firing corrections by the time the target comes within more effective range. It is not believed however, that any fixed rule should be established as to the range at which fire should be opened.

The majority of ships report coordinated attacks by 2 to 5 planes coming in often from several directions and within a relatively short period of time. Several ships have reported the presence of dummy planes just out of effective range. It is essential therefore that the attention of lookouts, gun crews and others be not diverted from their own sectors of responsibility by attacks from a single direction or by a single plane. It is also recommended that all stations be kept fully advised of the current situation as the attack is developing.

(d) Engineering:

As an attack is developing and preferably after the plane has started its run, speed should be increased to maximum. The ship should maneuver to the extent necessary to keep the plane on the beam where the maximum fire power can bear and in order to take advantage of the pilot's relative lack of control in range as compared with deflection. Violent maneuvers at high speed will materially decrease the accuracy of fire. When in company with other ships a close formation should be maintained in order to provide mutual fire support.

During low visibility or when using smoke screens, ships should not open fire, unless plane is attacking and is visually sighted, but should exploit to the fullest, the factor of concealment. If underway on patrol station, the ship should steam at relatively slow speeds, with as little wake as possible and with very frequent course changes.

3. Enclosures (A), (B), and (C) contain additional suggestions and are forwarded for information.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
CRUISER DIVISION FIVE
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER

00/rur

FB3-5/A16-3
Serial 0020

22 May 1945.

~~S E C R E T~~

From: Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR,
(Commander Cruiser Division FIVE).
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-ONE,
Commander FIFTH Amphibious Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Correlated opinions of Unit Commanders and Commanding Officers of those ships who have engaged suiciders.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 - ø6ø9øø May 1945.

1. In compliance with reference (a) the subject matter is submitted. Most of the destroyers which were damaged as a result of suicide crashes are now under the command of Commander Task Group 51.15 to whom reference (a) was also addressed for action.

2. There is submitted herein:

Enclosure (A) - Summary of Attack Date.
Enclosure (B) - Table I - Attack Date.
Enclosure (C) - Table II - Recommended Defense.
Enclosure (D) - ComCruDiv 5 (ComTaskForce 54) comments and recommendations.
Enclosure (E) - Copies of reports submitted by Unit Commanders in complying with their part of reference (a).

/s/ ALLAN E. SMITH.

Copy to:
ComPhibsPac (1)
Copy for:
ComFIFTH Flt (1)
ComBatRon ONE (1).

ENCLOSURE (P)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Summary of Attack Data.

The conclusion drawn from Table I is that the attacking suicider does not follow any set pattern. The attacks have varied in the following respects:

1. Time - - - - All but two attacks were made in daylight, one of remainder happening just after evening twilight.
2. Number of Planes - More than half of attacks by single planes, all types.
3. Altitude - - Majority very low, others 1500 to 5000 feet.
4. Diversion - Only two attacks accompanied by diversionary tactics.
5. Maneuvers - No set pattern.
6. Own Force - Unlike attacks on pickets, majority occurred when in company with other ships.
7. Location - - All areas located around OKINAWA.
8. Detection - Three contacted by radar at ranges from 20,000 to 36,000 yards; remainder were visual from "close" to 12,000 yards.
9. Gunfire - - About half taken under fire by 5/38 from 1,500 16,000 yards, others by 40MM within 5,000 yards.
10. Maneuver - Only three reports of planned maneuvers.
11. Results - - Eight shot down, five crashed, others unknown; none of the thirteen hit reporting ships.

II. Summary of Recommended Defenses.

General - - Go to high speed and maneuver in order that maximum number of guns may be fired at earliest opportunity.

A. Gunfire.

1. Unanimous agreement that fire should be maximum available and early.
2. 5"/38.
   (a) Fire at maximum range without waiting for "good solution" (12,000 yards).
   (b) Use large percentage of VT but insure some MK 18 fired for spotting and as deterrent to plane. Recommended ratio of VT to MK 18 vary from 86 per cent VT to 50 per cent.
   (c) Use fixed barrage until within 2,000 - 1,500 yards.
   (d) Keep shooting even when within arming range.
   (e) Modify VT fuze to reduce arming range; reduce influence sensitivity and increase intensity of tracer.
3. 40MM
   (a) Opinion divided on when to open fire. About half recommend holding fire until within range; others recommend firing outside effective range as deterrent.
   (b) More effective control system needed. Installation

SECRET

II. Summary of Recommended Defenses. (Cont.)

3. 40MM. (Cont.)
   of MK 63 director should have high priority.
   (c) Eliminate or reduce smoke.
4. Every attacking plane should be taken under fire with some weapon. Use of one 5" mount in local control for possible attack on disengaged side.
5. Emphasize training and use of local control.
6. Need for constant training - recommend full employment of TDD drone.
7. Miscellaneous recommendations:
   (a) Indicate sighting by firing short burst from automatic weapons.
   (b) Use of WP to confuse pilot.
   (c) Increase projectile velocity to keep pace with increased speed of planes.
   (d) For 2200 Ton Destroyers:
      (1) Remove after twin torpedo mount (decrease of use).
      (2) Replace with 40MM quad or two 40MM twins.
      (3) Remove one 36" searchlight and use platform to mount MK 63 director.
   (e) Provide 5" rocket with VT fuse.

B. Speed
1. Go immediately to highest possible speed.
2. Destroyer Commanders recommend:
   (a) When aircraft reported go to 20 knots.
   (b) When just beyond maximum range, go to emergency full speed.
   (c) Full boiler power when in isolated position in order to provide increased rate of acceleration.

C. Maneuvers.
1. Controlling factor is requirement of bringing maximum number of guns to bear; thus, plane should be kept on beam.
2. As plane dives, turn to place plane abaft beam; keeping stern toward diving plane, gives less target area and may cause it to drop short.
3. Destroyer Commanders recommend refinement:
   (a) For diving attack - keep plane on beam and turn as it nears ship.
   (b) For low level attack - radical maneuvers with highest possible speed.
4. Radical maneuvering depends on balancing of:
   (a) Disrupting of fire control set-up.
   (b) Evading plane after it has committed itself to dive.
5. At night or in low visibility, advantage of maneuvering

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II. Summary of Recommended Defenses. (Cont.)

C. Maneuvers (Cont.)
5. may be countered by disadvantage of disclosing position by increasing wake.

D. Other Comment.
1. Detection.
(a) Necessity for earliest detection and recognition.
(1) Get "First Team" to C.I.C. as early as possible.
(2) Exploit use of surface search radars to fullest.
(3) Use of Mk 12 radar for high angle search when enemy planes in vicinity.
(b) No substitute for trained, alert lookouts. Keep all aircraft under observation at all times.
2. Use of smoke screen by destroyer pickets if raid heavy or if damaged.
3. Use of decoy, flame and smoke in low visibility.
4. Fire power of one destroyer insufficient to cope with large, coordinated attack. A four-plane CAP is minimum requirement for destroyers operating singly.

TABLE I ATTACK DATA

TABLE I
ATTACK DATA

A. ATTACKING PLANES

B. OWN SHIPS

TIME	NO.	TYPE	ALTITUDE	DIVERSION	MANEUVERS	COMPOSITION OF FORCE	LOCATION	DE... HE...	...RANGE	GUNFIRE NO	GUNFIRE TYPE	RANGE	SPD	MANEUVER	RESULTS
					PICKING (DD685)										
Day	4	Tony	Very Low	None	All four approached together	300	- - - -	80... 5"...	25000	15 --	5/38 40MM	16000 4000	Incr. to 25	To keep Planes on beam	2 Disappeared 2 Shot down
					LAWS (DD558										
Day 0620	2	1 Unident. 1 Kate	2000 ft Very low	Yes	First made shallow dive from beam of KIMBERLY from 2000 ft 2nd approached later but was shot down while turning away.	200	Transport Screen	Visual Visual	8000 10000 12000		5/38				1 Crashed KIMBERLY 1 Shot down
Day 1845	1	Kate	5000 ft.	None	Suicide run through DD and CA fire	Formation ESTES, 1 BB 1 CA, 2 APD 2 DD	NAKAGU-SUKU WAN	Visual	Close		5/38 40MM				Shot down 500
					WEST VIRGINIA (BB48)										
Day 1547	1	---	150 ft.	---	Straight run veering course to head for ships in clear.										
					LONGSHAW (DD559										
Day 0926	3	Val	1500 ft.	Yes	Two attacked on port side. One made sweeping arc around formation and came down in 60° dive on LONGSHAW from astern.	CTU 54.1.4	NAGOWAN	Visual			40MM 20MM	close	20	Ship in hard right turn	Crashed 30 ft. off stbd. quarter.
					NEW YORK (BB 34)										
Nite 1930	1	Unident.	Low	None	Dived to low altitude over water, turned and headed for NEW YORK at high speed. When fired upon attempted to maneuver but hit mainmast.	TG 51.19	NAKAGU SUKU WAN	Sk... Visual	36000 1000		40MM 20MM	600-800	10	none	Hit NEW YORK then crashed over side.

ENCLOSURE (B) and (C)

SECRET

TABLE I ATTACK DATA

TABLE I — A. ATTACKING PLANES — B. OWN SHIPS

ATTACK DATA

TIME	NO.	TYPE	ALTITUDE	DIVERSION	MANEUVER	COMPOSITION OF FORCE	LOCATION	DETECTION METHOD	DETECTION RANGE	GUNFIRE NO	GUNFIRE TYPE	RANGE	SPD	MANEUVER	RESULTS
						NEWCOMB (DD 586)									
Nite 0650	3	Betty	100 Ft.	None		100	IE SHIMA	Radar	30,000	5	5/38	4000	---		One shot down
Day 0618	1	Nate	300 ft.	None		100	OKINAWA	Visual	4,000	5	5/38	4000			Shot down.
Dawn 0630	1	Unident.	600 ft.	None		100	OKINAWA	Visual	----	5	5/38	----	---	---	---
						BEALE (DD471)									
Day 1000	1	Unident.	Low	None	Dived on BEALE from stbd. quarter at steep angle.	100	A/S Screen	Visual	----		5/38	----	25	Full right rudder	Crashed close aboard
Dusk	1	Unident.	Low	None	Came in at glide angle of about 15 degrees and headed for mid section of ship.		2 miles N.W. KEZU SAKI	Visual	1500		5/38 40mm	1500 1500	Incr to 25	Hard left rudder	Crashed close aboard
						SALT LAKE CITY (CA25)									
Day	2	Unident.	2000 1900	Yes	First plane made straight glide from 10000 yds, 2nd two minutes later dove out of clouds in straight dive.	TF 54	12 miles west of HAGUSKI	Visual	30,000 6,000		5/25 40mm	2000	12	None	1 crashed in water. 1 hit INDIANAPOLIS
Day	2	Unident.	Low	Yes	First plane made low run, second, few minutes later in glide.	TF 54	off HAGUSKI	Visual			5/25		13	None	1 hit ZELLARS 1 hit TENNESSEE.

Table II
RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

TABLE II RECOMMENDED DEFENSE
Page 1

A. GUNFIRE	B. SPEED	C. COURSE CHANGE	D. OTHER COMMENT
Maximum Gunfire	Go immediately to high speed.	PICKING (DD 685) Maneuver for maximum gunfire. Fishtailing and turns merely interfere with gunfire when angle below 25 degrees.	
Start early and maintain volume of fire until attacking plane destroyed.		LAWS (DD 558)	
(a) Director Controlled 5" fire at maximum range without waiting for good solution. (Large percentage V.T. fumes when disposition permits). (b) Hold 40 & 20mm until plane within effective range. (c) Indicate sighting by firing short burst from auto weapons. (d) Early firing of prime importance.		COLORADO (BB 45) Day-time - Maneuver for maximum gunfire and on chance that pilot may be thrown off aimed approach. Night and Low Visibility Increase in wake visibility cancels advantages of maneuver.	55
Firing all AA in volume as soon as within range, each type.		WEST VIRGINIA (BB 48)	Air defense officer and lookouts concentrate search for possible attack other sectors.

TABLE II RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

A. GUNFIRE	B. SPEED	C. COURSE CHANGE	D. OTHER COMMENT
		COMDESRON 55	
Early opening of fire accurately and in volume. Keep shooting even after plane inside arming range. Use a few AAC to make plane maneuver. Use VT for same effect. Keep shooting in local control if power lost.	picket destroyers maintain full boiler power at all time. Difference in rate of acceleration tremendous.	Radical Maneuvering	Early detection use of smoke screen if raid heavy or if picket damaged. Use of decoy flame and smoke. MK.XII - 22 Radar much more effective than MK IV.
		COMDESRON 60	
Local control must be emphasized. 50% VT-Put mast lookout for other ships. Facility in shifting from MK 16 to VT barrage set up until ranges obtained and under 2000 yds. Remove after twin torpedo tube and install quad 40mm or 2 twins. Replace 20mm with 40mm Install MK 63 director. Target practice with TDD.		Diving attack - Keep ship broadside to plane and turn toward as it nears ship. Low level attack. Radical maneuvers with very highest speed.	Early Detection 1. Exploit use of surface search radars to fullest. 2. Use of MK 12 for high angle search when enemy planes suspected in vicinity. 3. No substitute for lookouts must stick to sector.
		COMDESRON 49	
Target practice with TDD. Development of technique of sector control. More effect to control system needed. Increase projectile velocity.	If speed of 25 kts. can be reached a radical turn after plane committed has some effect.	Bring maximum number guns to bear. Put target broad on beam, then bring on bow or quarter when within 3-4 miles.	Need for adequate early warning. Condition One in C.I.C. and guns.

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TABLE II
RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

A. GUNFIRE	B. SPEED	C. COURSE CHANGE	D. OTHER COMMENT
		CALLAGHAN(DD 792)	
Open fire at earliest range out to 12,000 yds. Use 2/5 MK 16 projectiles for spotting and deterrent VT 3/5. Final barrage prior to 1500 yds. 40mm and 20mm fire opened shortly before plane within range. One gun with VT controlled by 40mm director for strike on disengaged side.	High speed so that vessel will answer helm smartly.	Present beam to plane for gunfire. As plane dives bring plane abaft beam and stern moving toward suicider.	
		LONGSHAW (DD 559)	
Maximum fire power from all guns. 40mm considered most effective anti-suicide plane weapon.	Highest possible speed.	Radical Maneuver.	
		NEW YORK (BB 14)	
Maximum number firing guns to bear.	Maximum	Present beam to plane	
		TWIGGS (DD 591)	
Open fire at as great range as possible with both 5" and 40mm Take every attacking plane under fire with same weapon even if only a single 20mm.	Full boiler power available while aircraft at great range go to 20 kts. when just beyond maximum gun range increase to 25. Lower speeds desirable at hite.	Keep greatest threat as near beam as possible. Maneuver gentle so as not to upset fire control solution. Violent maneuvers after aircraft have committed selves to attack.	Lookouts on disengaged side. All aircraft under observation at all times.

[redacted]

TABLE II
RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

A. GUNFIRE	B. SPEED	C. COURSE CHANGE	D. OTHER COMMENT
	BENNION (DD 662)		
Several planes open fire at 9 miles. Single plane held fire to 4 miles. 20 & 40mm covered plane to crash.	20 kts. When range 8 miles. Emergency full when range 4 miles.	Target brought on beam for maximum fire power.	
	LEUTZE (DD 681)		
Concentrate, accurate AA fire of sufficient calibre to destroy plane before it can reach target. 5/38 most effective. (60% VT). Open fire 12,000 to 10,000 40mm effective but present method of control inadequate. MK 63 directors needed. Remove after torpedo mount & replace with 40mm quads & twins. Remove 36" searchlights and mount MK 63 director. One centerline 36" searchlight sufficient.	Increase speed to maximum.	Bring plane on beam for maximum guns to bear and make ship full deflection target for attacker. Turn away when plane within 2,000 yds.	
	NEWCOMB (DD 586)		
(1) Dive Attack Bring maximum number of guns to bear. (2) Low Level Attack Good gunnery and nothing else can save a ship. If attack by two planes si-	(1) Dive Attack Use engines to decrease time required to bring.	(1) Dive Attack Turn to put target on beam (2) Low Level Attack Turn to keep plane on beam. Radical manuvering of no avail. (Cond't page V	Fire-power of one DD insufficient to cope with large coordinated attack Four plane CAP minimum requirement for singly operating destroyers.

TABLE 11
RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

A. GUNFIRE	B. SPEED	C. COURSE CHANGE	D. OTHER COMMENT
multaneously from either side, even expert gunnery will probably not save the ship. 5/38 battery very effective with 4 to 1 ratio VT(MK32 inferior to MK53). 40mm fairly effective - needs set fuse similar to JAP 40mm vickers. Local control methods not sufficiently flexible.	JAP on beam then when plane committed to final glide increase speed to emergency flank to cause plane to miss astern.		
		MOBILE (CL63)	
Maximum volume of fire at maximum effective range by all batteries maintained until plane disintegrates. Use all available directors. Order of effectiveness 5/38 (MK 37 Dir.) 40mm (MK 63 Dir.) 40mm (MK 51 Dir.) 20mm (MK 14 Sight) 6/47 (MK 37 Dir.)		Present beam whenever possible.	Early recognition 8 high lookout stations at G.Q.
		WICHITA (CA45)	
With Present Armament Take under fire immediately on sighting. 86% VT in 5" battery. Suggested Armament Modification (1) VT Fuze (a) Reduce arming range to 200 yds.	Increase speed from standard to full.	Turn to put plane on beam. (Cont'd Page 71	

TABLE II RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

SECRET

TABLE II
RECOMMENDED DEFENSE

A. GUNFIRE	B. SPEED	C. COURSE CHANGE	D. OTHER COMMENT
(b) Reduce and alter influence sensitivity - 50 ft. to right and left. 10 ft. in line of fire. (c) Increase intensity of tracer for daylight observation. (2) Rocket with VT fuse. Eliminate smoke from 40mm.			
Maximum gunfire; 40mm particularly effective.	BEALE (DD 471)	Radical maneuvering swinging stern toward plane.	

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[redacted]

COMMENTS, DISPOSITION AND RECOMMENDATION
COMMANDER TASK FORCE FIFTY FOUR
(COMMANDER CRUISER DIVISION FIVE)

1. Purpose of Suicider. The enemy, losing general effectiveness in air power, seeks to employ special air weapons to delay or to defeat the threatened annihilation of his own air force. By employment of poor or student flyers and obsolete types of planes, the enemy hopes to conserve his better flyers and planes. Depending on his estimate of damage done and our pressure on him, a change to more experienced flyers and his most capable planes is to be expected.

2. All means available to our ships seldom used. It is an exceptional case when all the means available to a ship or task group are used against the suicider.

3. New and stronger cruising dispositions. The circular cruising disposition may not be the strongest defense against the suicider. (Discussion in Paragraph 3-A, Page D-3-A (2)).

4. Implementation of instructions to defeat suiciders. PacFleet 15CL-45 covers the suicider situation very well, the operating conditions in an OKINAWA campaign require mandatory directives from higher authority to properly implement it. (Discussion in Paragraph 4-A, Page D-4A (6)).

5. Radar pickets. The Japanese, in their weakened position, have elected to make radar pickets a primary target. With the experience of OKINAWA, the radar picket stations can be strenghtened. A radar picket group of 1 CL-AA and 4 DD would have the required strength for the requirements of the situation. (Discussion in Paragraph 5-A, Page D-5-A (8)).

6. New Weapons. It is questionable that any new weapon or great improvement in armament can be effected before the issue is decided. More effective defense and better results in improving and making fully effective our present means available is indicated.

7. Increased Muzzle velocity for AA guns. As suggested by others, its velocity should be increased to 5000 f.s. or the anti-aircraft gun will soon be entirely ineffective against such as rocket propelled plane. At times, it is painful to watch the slow-moving shells overtake the enemy planes. Development of a new gun may take a long time; unless initiated during the war, it cannot be expected that funds will be available after the war, due to the cost.

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3-A Design for Cruising Disposition against Suiciders.

The suicide bomber has a selected target; a definite ship. If he gets into his dive or close approach and misses, it is a very close miss and adjacent ships are not endangered. This shows that dispositions with reduced distances offer no special advantage to a suicider.

The ideal AA battery for defense against a suicider would be one fired from a pin point. As fire power is the main defense against the suicider, the distance between ships should be the smallest safe maneuvering distance. This is stated as one thousand yards for low speed dispositions, and twelve hundred for the fast carrier groups. In the fast carrier groups, if timely warning is received, and flight operations can be avoided during the suicide attack period, then the disposition should be contracted toward the center even though more units are placed inside. Only in this way can the batteries give mutual support by pulling them together to approximate firing from a point. Speed, manuevering, unmasking the full broadside are other factors and somewhat in conflict, and which modify concentration of the batteries toward a point.

The concept for a disposition against the suicider differs from the concept against the enemy torpedo plane where speed and manueuverability(especially the turn away from the torpedo plane) have a greater weight. The anti-torpedo plane disposition is opened up to reduce the continuity of targets; to protect the ships inside the disposition; while retaining good volume against a plane which is limited to a straight line low approach or glide; always from the outside of the disposition.

At the present writing, the enemy is confining the suiciders almost entirely to day effort; and the torpedo planes to dusk or dark. As long as this limitation of day and night employment remains, it determines the choice of disposition, without the aid of other information.

Recently a cruising disposition to comply with the following requirements was designed:

a- Continue fire support while formed in a disposition ready to repel air attack.
b - Cruise in a disposition which is strongest against suicider.
c - Initially, maneuver in restricted waters.
d - Non-homogenous units as to speed (CVE, CA, CL, DD).

The result was a cruising disposition called 6-VT, in the form of the block letter "I" ; a column of ships with reinforced ends. The reinforced ends prevent a plane from enfilading, and per-

COPY

3-A Design for Cruising Disposition against Suiciders.

mits a concentration of batteries stronger than in a circular disposition.

The column permits the most ships to fire at an attack which is directed towards its column; more ships then can fire effectively in a circular disposition. (The circular disposition needs to have the screen approximate a straight line in order to place the batteries of the next ships in a position to fire at the approaching attack planes). The slower ships are stationed in the middle of the column so that the high-speed ships at the ends can use their higher speed for a limited time. The ends also are permitted a change of line of bearing up to 40 degrees either side so that it can be normal to the attack if sufficient warning received.

The ships in the column steam in open order (fifty yards to right and left of axis) so that the line of the column has the maximum batteriesbearing and cannot be enfiladed.

The disposition is maneuvered as readily as the circular disposition.

Consideration has been given to other threats, such as the submarine. The senior destroyer commander designates the sonar search plan. The disposition is satisfactory against torpedo planes, except distance should be increased.

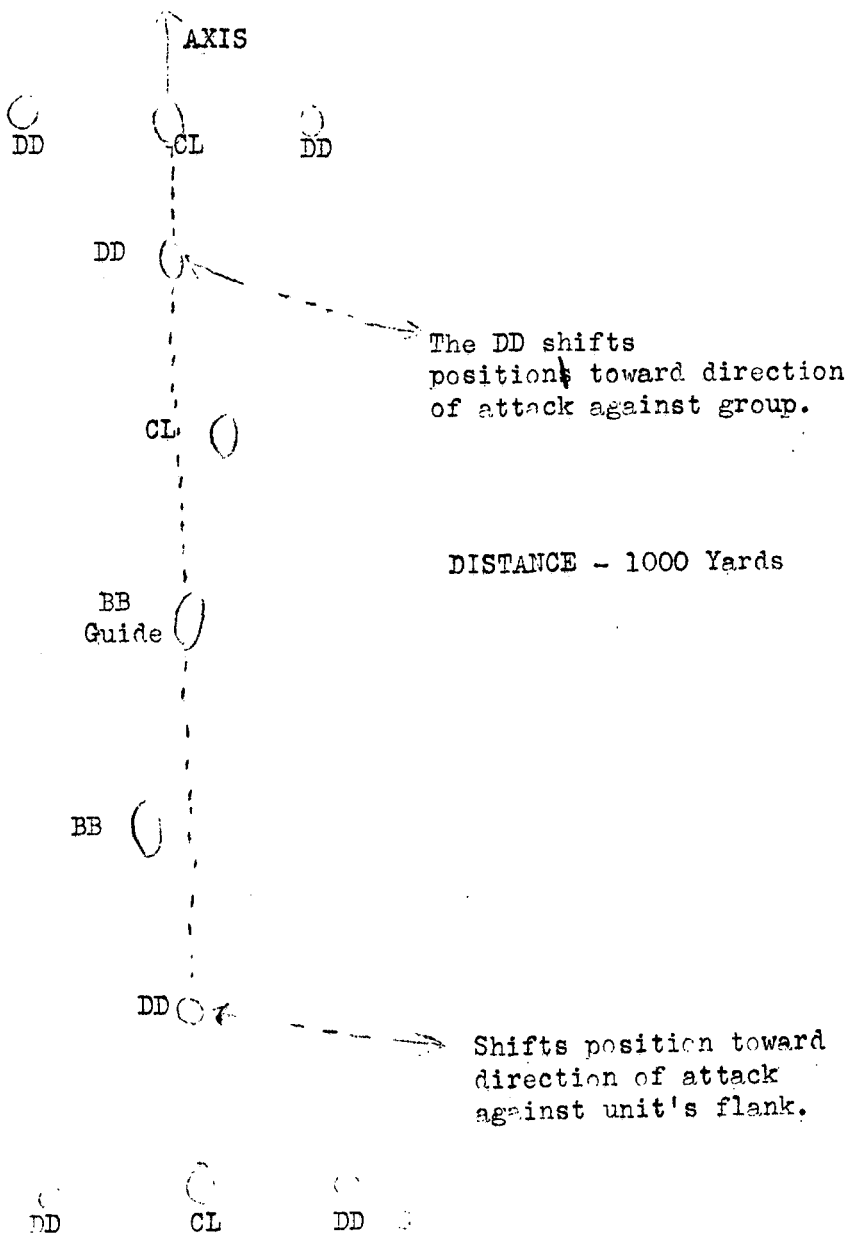
Two diagrams are shown for anti-suicide Cruising Disposition following:

Page D-3-A (4) - For Fire Support Task Group.
Page D-3-A (5) - For Fast Carrier Task Group

CRUISING DISPOSITION

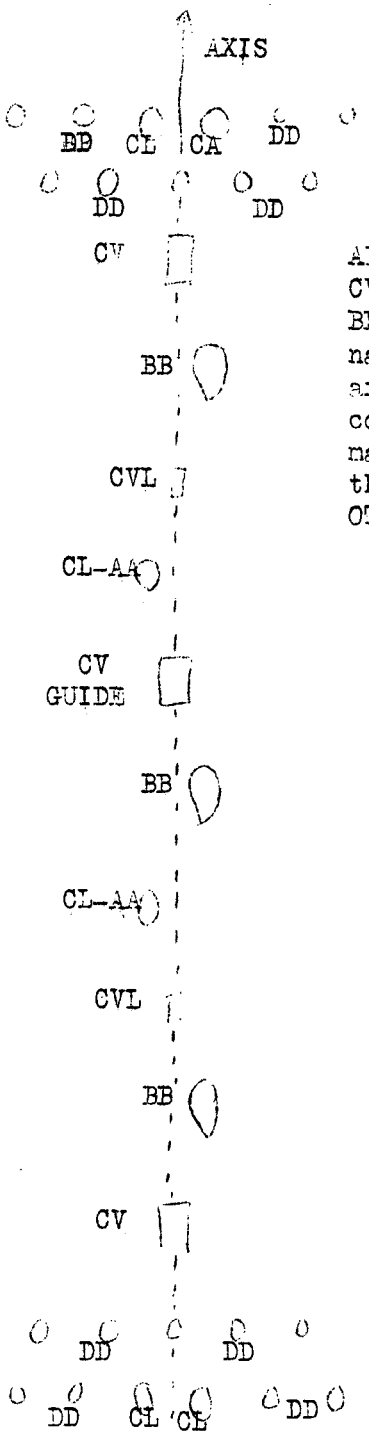
6-VT

Purpose - Suicider Defense and Fire Support



COPY

A similar 6-VT disposition for a Fast Carrier Group would appear as follows:



All distances are 1200 yards. The CV and CVL remain on the axis. The BB, CA, CL-AA are in open order, alternately 50 yds. to right and left of axis. In low visibility the flank commanders should have authority to make a turn signal, the remainder of the disposition to conform and await OTC next order.

Column is

Normal to Wind

The instructions for the original 6-VT are attached page D- (10)

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4-A Implementation of Suicider Instructions. Paragraph 2 states that it is exceptional when all the means available against suiciders are used. PacFleet Confidential Letter 15CL-45 lists the principal considerations necessary to defeat the suicider. PacFleet 15CL-45 is sound and the results of the subject survey add little to the methods set forth there.

Why is it that the sound methods of defense set forth in PacFleet 15CL-45 are not more nearly fulfilled in these suicider attacks? The reason is considered to lie in several conditions listed as follows:

a - Lack of drill and exercise.
b - Command organization.
c - Nature of OKINAWA operations.

a - Lack of drill and exercise. Drills and exercises are more needed in preparation for suicider defense than for any threat up to this phase of the war. Properly conducted drills, we know, bring on a correct reaction to a situation; properly conducted exercises give a correct solution to a situation. This reaction and solution give a smoothness of form; and expertness in the mechanics of tactics that gives time to look at the substance of the attack, which in turn permits bringing into play all the means available against the suicider. Yet such drills and exercises are not generally held; in fact, none are known to have been held at all in the past two months. A ship which has been in an operation such as the OKINAWA campaign---3 weeks, 6 weeks, or 8 weeks---giving continuous fire support every day and more than one-half of the nights, even if it held the drills recommended would likely not gain an advantage in so doing under the fire support operating conditions.

b - Command organization. The command organization is now so complex that a subordinate commander who sought to assign time or carry out drills as set forth in PacFleet Letter 15CL-45 would find himself in violent conflict with several other commands whose tasks require all the capabilities of the ships normally under such subordinate's usual command.

c - Nature of OKINAWA operations. Without wishing to delve into the depths of the phychological reactions of individuals, it can be stated that the personnel of a fire support ship which maintains fire for 45 to 65 days and half the nights with about every fifth day for a hard job of replenishment, are not as mentally alert as the best suicider defense requires. Frequent laughter is still heard and the morale is comparatively high. Brought up in a pacifistic era in our national life, our officers and men do not take easily the local disasters which hit individual ships. This psychological factor may easily be overrated, and it is not desired to.

do so. However, some weight should be given the matter in the entire problem.

The conclusions of this discussion are that in order to gain a satisfactory standard at once, the following are the methods for accomplishing:

a - Mandatory orders designating time, place, units to drill and exercise as one method of implementing the fundamental considerations of PacFlt 15CL-45. These mandatory orders must come from the highest echelon because the nature of the command organization and the tactical situation prevent subordinate commands from conducting exercises.

b - Pertinent procedure parts of PacFlt 15CL-45 should be made mandatory in action against suiciders. In other words, the form of attack is sufficiently routine to permit setting up a mandatory defense procedure. The little loss of initiative in making defense mandatory is acceptable as it is one method for gaining a generally higher standard of defense performance.

c - As our Navy generally uses guides rather than mandates and leaves the matter to the officer "on the spot" so he may use his initiative, such mandates as are issued under (a) and (b) above will be changed as soon as a higher standard of defense is gained, with the means now available.

SECRET

5-A Destroyer Radar Pickets.

Pickets have always been used throughout naval warfare history. Pickets are needed to get early information so that the main body can go about its work without danger of surprise and disorder. In 1943, as soon as the number of destroyers permitted, the fast carrier task groups turned to the employment of destroyer pickets especially for night warning of enemy ships and planes. The diversive effect of the pickets has also been commented on in the last two years. The pickets must show profit, else they become merely a diversion of own strength and weaken the main force according to their number.

At OKINAWA the destroyer pickets were outstanding in picket history, both because of the advance information furnished on enemy planes and because of the numerous successful actions against enemy dive bombers, torpedo planes, buzz bombers and suiciders. Along with this went considerable fighter director activity for CAP; later assigned to the pickets. As soon as the main operations permitted the radar pickets were strengthened by composing groups of two destroyers, LCI and CAP made a strong, mobile picket station and losses were reduced through its use.

The Japanese have the wrong physical objective when they select the radar pickets as their primary objective. This they have done habitually. The enemy made the same error in his physical objective during the GUADALCANAL Campaign. There he bombed our air strip on GUADALCANAL for 74 consecutive days and caused damage readily repaired. Our supply communications were having a critical struggle to maintain our position on GUADALCANAL and were quite vulnerable, but the enemy made no sustained effort against this physical objective.

The amphibious operation at OKINAWA has a screen composed of Task Force 58 which strikes at KYUSHU bases and intercepts enemy air strikes. The B-29 missions frequently strike on KYUSHU bases. But the cordon of destroyer radar pickets around the island have given advance information of enemy planes approaching. This timely information has been a most important factor in the security of the entire operation. A number of destroyers on picket duty have been sunk but the number of planes shot down by them has been very high. In view of the security given by the radar pickets, the losses seem quite reasonable and the general situation from a naval view point very satisfactory indeed.

The composition of these picket stations: Fast light ships with high speed, good maneuverability and fire power plus a CAP indicates the trend and need for future operations. The question is in a future similar requirement for radar pickets; what should be

the composition and type of these radar picket stations. Of course, all the factors have to be considered and like most decisions, it may be necessary to compromise in order not to run the extreme risk in other directions while strengthening the pickets.

The strongest radar picket unit we could have would be a Fast Carrier Task Group fully capable of fulfilling all requirements. As these groups are not available, something less must be organized. A cruiser-destroyer group would be strong; one cruiser and four destroyers; but the cruiser is a large target and compared to the numbers of destroyers, there are few cruisers available. A CL-AA with 4 destroyers would be an excellent composition for information and defensively against aircraft. It is not known whether the CL-AA's can be made available. The next lesser strength would be a group composed of five destroyers. Of course, this would soon run into numbers; but the number of stations might be reduced; while the less likely stations would be assigned but one destroyer or other type, in order to strengthen the more probable contact points, possibly five such radar destroyer picket groups could be formed with the numbers which can be made available. Each radar picket station should have a day CAP and one or two night fighters during dark hours, While usually undesirable to have your own submarines near your objective, an outer submarine radar screen - fifty miles further out than the destroyer radar pickets might be feasible. Submarines should be available as they find fewer and fewer targets for their torpedoes

ALLAN E. SMITH.

C O P Y
FB3-5/A16-3
Serial 0015

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
CRUISER DIVISION FIVE
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER

C O P Y
00/hc

[redacted]

16 May 1945.

N-A-V-A-L S-P-E-E-D-L-E-T-T-E-R

From: COMMANDER TASK FORCE 54.
To : TASK FORCE 54.
Info: CTF 51: CTG 51.22.

THIS IS COMCRUDIV FIVE CRUISING DISPOSITION SIX VT (TENTATIVE) PARA (A) SIMILAR TO A COLUMN WITH FLANKING DESTROYERS ON EITHER SIDE OF

THE END SHIPS CMA IT HAS THE FORM OF THE BLOCK LETTER I X ITS PURPOSE IS TO CONDUCT FIRE SUPPORT WHILE FORMED FOR GOOD AIR DEFENSE X

WHEN TYPES ARE NOT HOMOGENOUS AS TO SPEED IT PERMITS ALL TYPES TO USE FULL CAPABILITIES FOR LIMITED TIME X PARA(A) STATIONS ARE

NUMBERED FROM STATION NUMBER ONE ALONG THE AXIS IN SUCCESSION TOWARD THE REVERSE AXIS WITH THE GUIDE USUALLY NEAR THE CENTER X DISTANCE

ONE THOUSAND YARDS X THE NUMBER OF STATIONS ALONG THE AXIS DEPENDS UPON THE NUMBER OF SHIPS X THE CRUISERS ARE STATIONED AT THE ENDS.

OUTSIDE OF THE OBB's X ALL STATIONS ARE ON THE AXIS EXCEPT STATION ONE DASH ONE AND STATION ONE DASH TWO WHICH ARE DESTROYER STATIONS

CMA NORMAL TO THE AXIS AND RIGHT AND LEFT RESPECTIVELY FROM STATION ONE X DISTANCE ONE THOUSAND YARDS X THE TWO FLANKING DESTROYERS AT

THE OTHER END HAVE LIKE STATIONS CORRESPONDING TO THE STATION NUMBER AT THAT END X PARA (C) WHEN BOGIES ARE OUTSIDE 25 MILES COMMANDING

OFFICERS OF END CRUISERS (OR FLAG) CHANGE THE LINE OF BEARING OF THE FLANKING DESTROYERS TO FACILITATE FIRE SUPPORT MISSIONS X PARA (D)

WHEN AN END FLANK GROUP IS IN THE REAR THE DISTANCE IS OPENED AN EXTRA THOUSAND YARDS FROM THE OBB TO GIVE MORE SEA ROOM FOR HIGH

SPEEDS FOR SHORT TIME X PARA (E) IF THIS PARAGRAPH MADE EFFECTIVE BY SIGNAL THE FOLLOWING WILL BE THE PROCEDURE FOR GREATER FLEXIBILITY X

WHEN ATTACK IS DIRECTED AGAINST END FLANK (SUCH AS A LOW FLYING PLANE AT DUSK) THE COMMANDING OFFICER (OR FLAG OFFICER EMBARKED) OF THE

FLANK CRUISER WILL MANEUVER HIS FLANK GROUP AS A UNIT X THE REMAINDER OF THE CRUISING DISPOSITION WILL CONFORM WITHOUT SIGNAL UNTIL OTC

MAKES SIGNALS X PARA (F) THE DESTROYER IN STATION NEXT TO END CRUISER WILL CMA WHEN INFORMATION OF BOGEY SHOWS THE ATTACK WILL BE DIRECTED

AGAINST THAT FLANK CMA SHIFT RIGHT OR LEFT OF THE END CRUISER TOWARD ENEMY ATTACK TO REINFORCE THAT FLANK WITH HER FIRE POWER X PARA (G)

WHEN CRUISING DISPOSITION IS SIGNALLED BY OTC TO TAKE OPEN ORDER CMA SHIPS ON THE AXIS EXCEPT END CRUISERS AND GUIDE CMA WILL SHIFT FIFTY

YARDS TO RIGHT OR LEFT ACCORDING TO WHETHER ODD OR EVEN SHIP FROM VAN

C O P Y
FB3-5/A16-3
Serial 0015

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
CRUISER DIVISION FIVE
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER

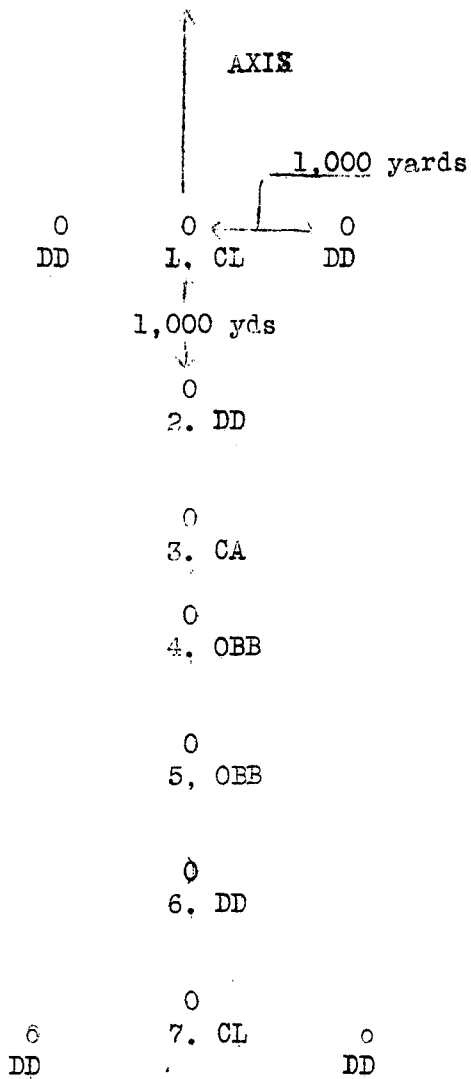
COPY

[redacted]

N A V A L S P E E D L E T T E R

PARA (H) THE DISPOSITION WILL CONTINUE AT FIRE SUPPORT MISSIONS, BEING MANEUVERED AT LOW SPEED UNTIL AIR ATTACK IS IMMINENT X

PARA (I) SONAR GUARD AS DIRECTED BY SENIOR DESTROYER COMMANDER X
RADAR GUARD AS SIGNALLED BY OTC X



ALLAN E. SMITH

AUTHENTICATED

s/s ROBERT C CLOSS

71

DD471/A16/wg
Serial 037

U.S.S. BEALE (DD 471)
c/o Fleet Post Office.
San Francisco, Calif.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 May 1945

From: The Commanding Officer
To: The Commander, Task Force FIFTY-ONE.

Via: The Commander, Task Force FIFTY-FOUR.

Subject: Effectiveness of weapons and maneuvers against suicide planes.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Despatch 060900 May 1945.
(b) CTF 54 Despatch 061420 May 1945.

1. This vessel has on two occasions successfully evaded suicide planes by the use of gunfire and maneuvers.

(a) On the forenoon of 14 April 1945 the BEALE was employed in the anti-submarine screen northeast of IE SHIMA. Several enemy planes were in the vicinity. At about 1000 one plane dived on the BEALE from a position on the starboard quarter coming in at a steep angle. The BEALE was at the time steaming at 25 knots and turning under full right rudder. Fire was opened with all weapons that would bear and the smoke from No. 1 40mm obscured view of the plane from the bridge. Someone aft yelled, "He's crossing to the port quarter," whereupon the rudder was shifted to hard left, taking effect in time to swing the stern clear of the plane. The plane crashed close aboard, abreast No. 4 40mm mount.

(b) On the evening of 4 May 1945 the BEALE was about two miles northeast of KEZU SAKI POINT, steaming on a course of 070 at 10 knots. It was dark and visibility was about 2,000 yards. A low flying enemy plane was sighted on the starboard quarter at about 1500 yards and taken under fire by all weapons that would bear. The plane came in at a glide angle of about 15° and headed for the midsections of the ship. Speed was increased to 25 knots and the rudder put hard left. The plane crossed the ship, barely clearing the after mast and crashed in flames close aboard to port.

DD471/A16/wg
Serial 037

U.S.S. BEALE (DD 471)
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

8 May 1945

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander, Task Force FIFTY-ONE.

Via: The Commander, Task Force FIFTY-FOUR.

Subject: Effectiveness of weapons and maneuver against suicide planes.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Despatch 060900 May 1945.
(b) CTF 54 Despatch 061420 May 1945.

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2. On both these occasions the planes appeared to be breaking up from the effect of gunfire (particularly 40mm fire) before they reached the ship. It is believed that in each case the pilot no longer had control to counter the radical maneuver of the ship. In both cases the planes approached on the quarter and a hard over turn, swinging the stern toward the plane, was successful in causing the plane to overshoot.

D. N. COFFEE

Refer To:
FC4-49/A16-3
Serial 001

UNITED STATES FLEET
DESTROYER SQUADRON FORTY-NINE
U.S.S. PICKING (DD685), FLAGSHIP

(C O P Y)

c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California.
7 May 1945.

~~S E C R E T~~

From: Commander Destroyer Squadron FORTY-NINE.
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-ONE.
Via : Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR.

Subject: Effectiveness of Weapons and Maneuvers Against Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) CTF-51 Secret Dispatch 060900 of May 1945.

1. In considering defense against suicide plane attacks, the following general essentials are stated in order to emphasize their basic importance:

A. Need for adequate early warning. This is necessary in order to get general quarters crews at the control stations, CIC, and batteries. The rate with which the attack develops and the need for rapidity, smoothness, and accuracy of fire present problems which even the "first team" of any ship has to strain to solve.

B. Need for target practice training with drones or TDD drones, where several maneuvering targets are present at ranges of about five to ten miles and then one or more commences high speed diving runs on the ship. The purpose of this is to eliminate the long period or preliminary tracking at steady courses and speeds that gives the director and control parties a chance to concentrate on a single target and get a settled solution long before firing ranges are reached. Control parties and lookouts must be qualified to maintain complete observation on at least four planes simultaneously and then get on the proper one after it begins the run from a relatively close range (five to ten miles.)

C. Need for development of technique of sector control or division of several planes among several ships in company so that each one is covered.

2. In considering weapons, opinion in the squadron is about evenly divided between five inch and forty millimeter guns. The twenty millimeter guns are considered to be of very limited effectiveness due to their short effective range and limited destructiveness of single hits. The superiority of the five inch is attributed to the greater range and especially the superiority of it's fire control system. The squadron commander is of the opinion that by far the greatest room for

[redacted]

7 May 1945.

Subject: Effectiveness of Weapons and Mancuvers Against Suicide Planes.

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improvement in gunnery lies in improving the control of the 40MM batteries. When it is considered that hits are now measured in terms of a fraction of one per cent, it should be apparent that we have an adequate battery but we do not have adequate control installations and methods of operation. Methods, and skill in operating the gear we have, can be considerably improved if adequate training can be obtained. It is belived that with present personnel fluctuations each ship should fire at least five realistic drone runs each month. Present operation conditions often put a ship in a hot combat station with no practices, except on bursts, for three to six months prior to that time.

3. Even greater improvement can be made if more effective control systems can be developed and installed in the ships. If the control systems of the five inch batte ry were actually producing the results usually assumed in theoratical discussions, all the suiciders would have been destroyed before they hit any ships. The fact that over fifty destroyers have been hit and seriously disabled in this operation is quantitative fact which no amount of "testing in rear areas can ever upset.

4. It is considered that one of the biggest sources of weakness in our fire control systems is a direct result of the low velocity of our projectiles, as compared to plane speeds. With the development of rocket and jet propulsion the plane speeds will go even higher. During the last twenty years while plane speeds have tripled, our projectile velocities have dropped from 3150 f/s in the 5"/51 caliber gun to 1912 to 2600 f/s in the 5"/38 caliber gun that we are using in 1945. The low projectile velocity with it's resulting long time of flight imposes a very heavy burden on the fire control system. The fire control system has to not only locate the target in space from a rolling platform, but it has to solve the target's motion and predict where the target will be when the slow moving projectile reaches the target. All errors in solution of these quantities are magnified tremendously if plane speed increases are not matched by corresponding increases in projectile velocity. With present plane speeds it is considered that a projectile velocity of 5000 f/s is absoultely necessary to relieve the fire control system from having to carry the heavy burden of antiquated gun design. This is especially true in the heavy machine guns where we are unwilling

FC4-49/A16-3
Serial 001

~~SECRET~~ 7 May 1945

Subject: Effectiveness of Weapons and Maneuvers Against Suicide Planes.

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to give the directors the weight and space allowance of the Mark 37,5 Inch Director System. Before leaving the subject of future development it is strongly recommended that the heavy machine gun have it's projectile weight doubled so that one hit will suffice to crash a plane. With the development of more rugged modern planes our projectiles effectiveness must be increased likewise.

5. In considering individual ship maneuvers, opinion seems to be divided. All favor high speed and radical battery. It is believed that in order of importance, maneuvers should be:

First - Bring maximum number of guns to bear immediately.
Second - If a speed of 25 knots or more can be reached, a radical turn after the plane is committed has some effect. It is difficult though to get this turn without blanking some guns and in general, maneuvers should not be so radical as to reduce effectiveness of the battery. This can be done by putting the target about broad on the bow (or quarter), and then bringing it broad on the quarter (or bow) when the target reaches a range of 3-4 miles. This is more effective with a plane in a dive than with one making a low horizontal approach.

6. It is believed that in all cases a tight formation which permits the guns of several ships to reach each target is preferable to a loose one with independent ships maneuvers. In general, all offensive ships should be on a single circle with defensive ships such as carriers and transports inside.

/s/ BERT F. BROWN

DD662/A16-3
Serial 00114

U.S.S. BENNION-(DD662)
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

[redacted]

7 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. BENNION (DD662).
To : The Commander Task Force FIFTY ONE POINT FIVE.

Subject: Suicide Attacks - Defense Against.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Despatch 060900 of May 1945.

1. This vessel has been subjected to suicide attacks from medium and low altitudes both during daylight and at night.

2. Successful interception by CAP is primary and most effective defense. The low altitude close in CAP has been effective in intercepting planes which get past the high CAP.

3. During daylight when planes are closing directly at the ship speed is increased to 20 knots at a range of about eight miles and target is brought on the beam for maximum fire power. If several planes are involved main battery opens fire at 5 miles but if only a single plane, fire is held to 4 miles in order to give maximum opportunity for hitting before target commences to maneuver. At this time emergency full speed is rung up and ship is constantly maneuvered to keep closest target on the beam. Although the main battery has registered hits in all cases it has been the 40MM and 20 MM guns that finally caused plane to crash.

4. Gunners must stay at their guns and on the plane as it closes. This cannot be too strongly stressed as in three cases this ship would have been hit otherwise. In one case plane crashed 20 yards off port beam and in the other cases plane exploded at or over the ship showering it with debris and gasoline but with minor damage.

R. H. HOLMES.

cc:
CTF 54.
CTG 56.

COPY COPY COPY

U.S.S. MOBILE (CL 63),
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California

CL63/A16-3
Serial 002

8 May 1945

SECRET

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander Task Force 54.

Subject: Action Against Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) C.T.F. 54 Serial 0048 of 22 April 1945.
(b) C.T.F. 51 desp. 060900.

1. The doctrine aboard this vessel for combatting enemy suicide plane attacks coincides with the principles laid down in reference (a).

2. This command has long believed that early recognition is essential in defeating suicide attacks, and with this in mind, eight additional high lookout stations are manned at A.A. Defense and at General Quarters. These lookouts, seated in specially designed chairs, cover the vertical sectors from 40° to 90° above the horizon, thereby increasing the probability of early sighting of high altitude attacks and at the same time relieving the regular sky lookouts of the burden of covering all position angles.

3. Doctrine aboard this ship calls for maximum volume of fire to be attained at maximum effective ranges by all batteries, said fire to be maintained until the plane disintegrates. To this end, the beam of the ship is presented to the attacking plane whenever it is possible to do so.

4. This ship advocates the use of all directors that are available with the stipulation that operators on Mk 51 directors are to shift to Mk 37 control if the target becomes obscured by smoke.

5. During the current operation, this vessel has taken under fire sixteen enemy suicide planes. It is believed that in no case was the MOBILE specifically singled out for a determined attack.

6. During the period 5-6 April, while operating with Task Force 54, to the Westward of Okinawa, thirteen suicide planes were taken under fire by this vessel. On twelve of these attacks, due to the range, the 5-inch 38 caliber battery was used exclusively. Only one plane came within effective range of the 40 MM battery. Because of the great volume of fire put up by the Task Force, it is impossible to definitely state whether 5-inch or 40 MM fire contributed most to the destruction of the enemy.

CL63/A16-3
Serial 002

8 May 1945

SECRET

Subject: Action Against Suicide Planes.

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7. On 16 April, while operating off Ie Shima as a fire support unit under Commander Task Group 51.21, this vessel took under fire three suiciders, one of which, a Kate, was splashed due to the fire from MOBILE's 5-inch battery. A second, also a Kate, succeeded in reaching the area of the fire support units before finally being knocked down. The latter plane was piloted by a clever and deceptive pilot. His "corkscrew" approach successfully threw off the solution of the Mark I Computer time and again. The Mark 63 director controlling a sector of the 40 MM battery was, judging by the tracers, able to follow more readily, and it is believed that it contributed greatly to the splashing of this plane. Due to the great volume of fire, however, again it cannot be positively stated as to which weapon should receive the greater amount of credit. The third plane fired upon was splashed far out from the vessel at about 12,000 yards range. Smoke obscured the target, preventing any accurate observations to be made.

8. It is the opinion of the Commanding Officer that the order of effectiveness of the ship's batteries against this type of attack rank as follows:

(a) 5"/38 battery Mk 37 director control.
(b) 40 MM battery, Mk 63 director control.
(c) 40 MM battery, Mk 51 director control.
(d) 40 MM battery, Mk 37 director control.
(e) 20 MM battery, Mk 14 sight.
(f) 6"/47 battery, Mk 37 director control.

C.C. MILLER.

BB34/S74
Serial: 035

U.S.S. NEW YORK (BB34)

Care Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.
8 May 1945.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

From: The Commanding Officer. (C O P Y)
To : The Commander Task Force FIFTY FOUR.

Subject: Suicide Planes - Effectiveness of maneuvers and weapons against.

References: (a) CTF 54 despatch L744 (061420).
(b) CTF 51 despatch L699 (060900).

1. On 14 April 1945, at 1939, during end of evening twilight, the NEW YORK was on course 135°(true), speed 10 knots, in course with units of Task Group 51.19. Ship was silhouetted from east against glow of western sky. At 1920 a bogey was picked up by the SK radar at@70° (true), distance 18 miles. Effort was immediately made to vector the forward Mark 50 AA director on this bogey. Due to the limitations of the Mark 10 radar installation on the Mark 50 director, no success was had. At about 1927 a destroyer on the port bow opened fire and the bogey moved aft on the port side. Suddenly the plane dived to a low altitude over the water and one observer reported seeing two explosions in the water.

2. By this time the plane was in the sector of the task group formation, abaft the port beam of the NEW YORK. It turned and headed directly for the NEW YORK at high speed. When the plane was about 1000 yards from the ship and under fire by the WICHITA machine guns, the first visual sighting was made by personnel on the bridge.

3. Fire was opened with 40mm and 20mm machine guns when plane was between 600 and 800 yards; 410 20mm and 80 40mm rounds were expended. When fire was opened the pilot's reaction seemed to be to pull back on his stick and the plane's starboard wing struck the port leg of the mainmast. The plane spun around, crashed into the ship's plane on the catapult atop Turret III and continued over the starboard side, striking the water about fifty feet away.

4. No maneuvers were made by the ship.

5. It is possible that if fire had been opened any earlier, the pilot would have been able to recover from his first reaction and plane would have struck at a lower level against Turret III with consequent much greater damage to the ship.

6. It is recommended that for best defense ship make maximum speed and turn so as to present beam to enemy, thus bringing the greatest number of firing guns to bear.

/s/ K.C. CHRISTIAN

Copy to:
ComBatDiv FIVE
ComBatDiv ONE.

CA45/A16-3
Serial: 004

U.S.S. WICHITA

Care Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.,
7 May 1945.

~~S E C R E T~~

From: Commanding Officer. (C O P Y)
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR.

Subject: Relative Effectiveness of Various Weapons and Maneuvers against Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) CTF 54 secret desp. 061420 of May 1945.
(b) CTF 54 secret ltr A16-3, ser 0048 of 22 April 1945.

1. WICHITA has been attacked by one suicide plane and has been in company with other ships which were so attacked on approximately eight occassions.

2. The following countermeasures were effectively employed during the attack on this ship and resulted in the complete destruction of the "Kamakaze".

(a) Suicider taken under fire immediately upon first sighting.
(b) Speed increased from standard to full.
(c) Left rudder ordered since attack developed from port quarter.
(d) 86% VT fuzed projectiles employed by the five-inch battery.

3. The credit for the destruction of this plane was shared by early 40MM hits which destroyed its tail and left wing and a direct five-inch hit which blew the remainder of the aircraft apart.

4. The measures outlined in reference (b) are considered sound and as adequate as yet devised.

5. In considering additional measures it appears desirable to approach the problem with two separate outlooks; first, with the idea of combatting this threat with ships armed as they are at present; and second, with a view to future armament developments.

CA45/A16-3
Serial: 004

U.S.S. WICHITA

[redacted]

(C O P Y)

Subject: Relative Effectiveness of Various Weapons and Maneuvers against Suicide Planes.

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6. In the first premise it is suggested that the influence fuze be modified as follows:

(a) Reduce its arming range to 200 yards.
(b) Reduce and alter its influence sensitivity to assure a maximum influence to the right or left of the line of fire of fifty (50) feet; in the line of fire of ten (10) feet. This recommendation is due to the fragmentation lobes (pattern) of the shell and to the lethal range of its burst.
(c) Increase the intensity of the tracer to assure daylight observation.

7. To effect destruction with the five-inch battery it is believed that complete reliance must be placed in VT fuzed projectiles and for that reason this ship keeps this type of projectile with the attendant power charge in the tray at all times in all manned guns.

8. In considering the second case stated in paragraph 5, it appears necessary to reconsider the relative importance of the defensive elements involved. Assuming that the ship's heavy antiaircraft battery is sufficiently trained skilled and alert, four problems remain which are all matters of material. The hitting power of the five-inch must be maintained, the volume of fire must be increased, close range accuracy must be improved and slewing rate must be increased.

9. To arrive at a solution at this late period in the war it is fully appreciated that certain sacrifices and compromises will have to be accepted. However, it is suggested that the rocket is potentially the best answer. Rockets have the necessary hitting power, the required rate of fire and the desired slowing rate could be attained by means of a proper design of launcher and amplidyne drive equipment. It is believed that the tremendous volume of rocket fire would easily counterbalance the lack of accuracy now attainable. The rocket employed would, of course, be VT fuzed.

(C O P Y)

CA45/A16-3
Serial: 004

U.S.S. WICHITA

7 May 1945.

SECRET

Subject: Relative Effectiveness of Various Weapons and Maneuvers against Suicide Planes.

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10. The 40MM battery is now considered the primary defensive weapon against the suicide attack because it approximates the proposed new equippage suggested in paragraph 9. Its most noticeable weakness is its excessive smoke. This is particularly noticeable at the slow speeds often required during amphibious operations.

/s/ D. A. SPENCER.

Copy to:
CCD 13
CCD 4

FC3-5/A16-3
Serial 0019

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
CRUISER DIVISION FIVE
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER

SECRET

22 May 1945.

From: Commander Cruiser Division FIVE.
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR.

Subject: Four suicide actions against adjacent ships observed from Flagship, ComCruDiv FIVE.

1. On the morning of 31 March, ten minutes before sunrise twelve miles west of HAGUSHI anchorage, ships of Task Unit 54.3.2 had just begun to proceed from night cruising disposition toward day fire support stations. The NEW MEXICO, with one other BB and just ahead of the SALT LAKE CITY, shot down a suicider which started in a glide at about 2000 feet from a distance of about 10,000 yards. The plane made no evasive maneuvers and headed straight for the NEW MEXICO which, joined by the other ships, hit it and it splashed four hundred yards short of the NEW MEXICO's beam. NEW MEXICO speed about 13 knots; no maneuvering.

2. Two minutes later, a second suicider dove out of the clouds at 1900 feet and hit the INDIANAPOLIS 1,000 yards astern of th SALT LAKE CITY. The SALT LAKE CITY's two after 40MM and probably one or two 40 MM in the INDIANAPOLIS got out very short bursts; practically no fire power. Speed 12-16 knots, without maneuvering; although there were some just previous to hit.

3. In the afternoon 14 April in circular cruising disposition with a destroyer screen fifteen hundred yards outside the OBB and cruisers, a suicider started a low run toward the disposition The ZELLARS was on the port bow of the SALT LAKE CITY about 2,000 yards. The fire power was ample but not centered on the plane. When it was over the ZELLARS, the suicider winged over and dove and hit the ZELLARS just abaft the starboard bridge. Fire was started in ample time by the ships but was rated ineffective. The speed was 13 knots. The ZELLARS had started a slow turn which did not make any material change in the situation.

4. In a few minutes, a second plane started a glide for the TENNESSEE. Neither the cruising disposition, at 13 knots, nor the TENNESSEE changed course. The suicider and the TENNESSEE were headed directly for each other until the suicider wing hit about the forstop and it crashed on the starboard side about abreast of Number 3 turret. The fire power was moderate, ragged, and not accurate. The suicider may have been hit before it crashed.

ALLAN I. SMITH.

COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON FIFTY-FIVE
P14-55/FB4-109 U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
A16-3 U.S.S. CALLAGHAN (DD792) (Flagship)
Serial 007

8 May 1945. (C O P Y)

SECRET

From: Commander Destroyer Squadron FIFTY-FIVE.
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR (ComCruDiv 5).

Subject: Japanese Suicide Plane Attacks.

Reference: CTF 51 Despatch 060900 of May.

1. Practically every comment that I have to make about Japanese suicide plane attacks has been made before in my action reports. However, my recommendations are submitted herewith, not only for the information of Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR, but also for review by commanding officers of Destroyer Squadron FIFTY-FIVE, several of whom have assumed command since beginning of the current operations.

2. My recommendations follow:

(a) Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the importance of early detection, early opening of fire accurately and in volume, and radical maneuvering. These tactics have been stressed repeatedly, by many high authorities, and yet they continue to be violated on occasions. A destroyer captain, whose ship had been damaged lightly while on PICKET station, recently said to me, "Believe me, from now on I will have full boiler power available when bogies are in the area." Such a decision is not hindsight; he had been forewarned. I recommend that picket destroyers maintain full boiler power at all times, even though this means more frequent upkeep periods for cleaning boilers. It is my opinion that PORTERFIELD would have been hit by the second suicider that attacked on 10 April, even though that suicider was burning, if the ship had not had all boilers cut in. The difference in maximum speed obtainable, with two boilers and with four, is not very great, but the difference in rate of acceleration is tremendous. Destroyers, other than pickets, should keep steam boosted on spare boilers, ready to cut in on five minutes notice, except when these destroyers have "twenty-three knot underway upkeep" for boiler cleaning.

During the present operations, I estimate that more Jap planes have turned away when fire was opened early and in volume, than have pressed home the attack. This is based solely on personal observation; only two single Pannel Jets have attempted to push the attack home. About seven or eight have withdrawn.

Serial: 007

COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON FORTY-FIVE
U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
U.S.S. CALLAGHAN (DD792) (Flagship)

S[redacted]T

8 May 1945.

Subject: Japanese Suicide Plane attacks.

(b) Keep shooting even after the Jap has closed inside the arming range. You may get a direct hit.

(c) Use a few AA common projectiles. When specials only are used and the Jap pilot is cagey, you may not get any bursts. The Jap gets bold and confident, thinking that your shooting is erratic. A few more bursts near him may make him maneuver and upset his planned attack.

(d) The use of white phosphorous may or may not be a good idea. I used it once several months ago at night on a single bogie that came at my LST convoy from low over land. Several white phosphorous shells were fired, to burst well ahead of the Jap. He retired immediately. On this occasion it was believed to be more important to break up the attack quickly, because of slow convoy, than to take a chance on shooting the plane down. However, it is believed that the same idea might be used at night when a ship is about to be overwhelmed by enemy planes. A few white phosphorous burst might blind and confuse the Jap pilots; the bursts might be taken for Jap planes blowing up. If the Japs attack in formation, several white phosphorous fired ahead of them almost certainly will spoil their plans.

(e) The preliminary laying of a smoke screen by pickets, particularly a circular one, may be useful when attacked. I don't see how it can do any harm. If the attack is light, the picket may prefer not to use the smoke, but if the attack is heavy or if the picket is damaged he may choose to dart in and out of the smoke, changing course radically while in smoke, or may drift into the smoke after being damaged, and then make more smoke. I recommend that destroyers be equipped with smoke pots.

(f) Recently a picket reported that after shooting down a bandit at night, the plane burned for one hour and a half. The flames were attacked by other Jap planes. This leads to the belief that the use of isolated smoke pots at night, or better still an apparatus that will float and give off both smoke and flames, might provide some interesting results. A depth charge or two might be fired to increase the illusion of a damaged ship. The Japs might conceivably suicide into smoke, or at least get themselves up for a pot shot. The picture

(C O P Y)

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COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON FIFTY-FIVE
U.S. PACIFIC FLEET
U.S.S. CALLAGHAN (DD792) (Flagship)

Serial: 007

[redacted]

8 May 1945.

Subject: Japanese Suicide Plan attacks.

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will not be clear to them.

(g) It is quite natural that in general, destroyers equipped with Mark XIX-22 radars have had much better success at shooting down Japs at night than have destroyers equipped with Mark IV radars. It is recommended that only those equipped with Mark XIX-22 radars be assigned to picket duty.

(h) Keep shooting in local control when power is lost. One destroyer, after being hit by three suiciders, destroyed a fourth by firing local control, when the Jap was about 100 yards away and appeared certain to crash into the bridge. A hand runner should be provided at each gun.

3. I know that some picket ships, as well as some other ships, are getting a little worried. Until such time as the situation is relieved, it is recommended that outstanding pickets, as well as other ships that have performed exceptionally well, be publicized by name to the press. This is certain to be a morale booster, and may increase the desire to perform hazardous duties and lessen the desire to retire for a cooling period. Everyone know that this would be a difficult operation. The average American fighting man does not mind fighting, but he wants the home front to know that he is doing a fine job, under difficult conditions and that his efforts or at least those of his ship, are being recognized, not after the war, but now. I recommend this censorship be relaxed slightly, to permit men taking part in this operation to write a few details of our successes to their families.

4. It is recommended that Jap suicide failures be given much publicity. The Jap Kamikaze Kid who so "heroically" gave his life for his emperor by diving into our hospital ship COMFORT, while the ship was following full hospital ship procedure, is an excellent item for publicising; that Jap had plenty of armed targets available if he wanted to seek them out.

/s/ A. E. JARRELL.

cc: CDD 110
LONGSHAW
LAWS
FRICKETT
PORTERFIELD
PRESTON
CASSIN YOUNG
CALLAGHAN
IRWIN

(C O P Y)

U.S.S. LONGSHAW (DD559)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

DD559/A16-3
Serial 070

10 May 1945.

SECRET

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander Task Force 54.

Subject: Report evaluating relative effectiveness of various weapons and maneuvers against suicide planes.

Reference: (a) C. T. F. 51 secret despatch 060090 of May 1945.

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following data and opinions concerning suicide planes are submitted:

2. On April 7, 1945, at 0926, while operating with TG 54.1.4 south of IE SHIMA in NAGO WAN, the USS LONGSHAW was the object of attack of a Japanese suicide plane, a VAL, which crashed close aboard on the starboard quarter.

Three VALS were sighted visually at about 1500 feet to the northward of the formation; two attacked the formation on the port side and the third VAL made a sweeping arc around the formation and came down a 60° dive on the Longshaw from astern.

The ship's speed was 20 knots and the OOD, who was conning the ship from the port side, had the ship in a hard right turn to avoid ships maneuvering ahead.

As the plane came down it was taken under fire by the after 20's and guns 45 and 43. Hits were scored repeatedly, especially by the 20's as the plane came closer, butthe plane did not smoke or flame.

When quite low, the ship banked to the right to correct his aim for the ship's turn and crashed about 30 feet on the starboard quarter.

3. It is the opinion of the Commanding Officer that the ship being in a turn was chiefly responsible for causing the plane to miss.

From this experience and others with suicide planes in the Seventh Fleet, it is believed that the best defense against suicide planes is highest possible speed and radical maneuvers of the ship, coupled with maximum firepower from all guns. The 40MM gun is thought to be the most effective anti-suicide plane weapon.

/s/ T. H. VOGELEY

cc: ComDesDiv 110
ComDesRon 55.

A16-3 COMMANDER DESTROYER DIVISION 110

Serial 003 c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.
8 May 1945.

~~S E C R E T~~

From: Commander Destroyer Division ONE HUNDRED TEN.
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-FOUR.

Subject: Report on encounters with Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Secret despatch 060900 of May 1945.
(b) CTF 54 Secret despatch 061420 of May 1945.

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b) report of enemy suicide plane attacks witnessed by this command is submitted herewith:

(a) There have been only three enemy suicide plane attacks witnessed by this command at range close enough to warrant comment. These are as follows:

(1) During the first light of dawn on 25 March while the LANE was proceeding to assigned screening station to west of KERAMA RETTO several enemy planes were reported coming in from the north. Anti-aircraft fire was observed to the north and in the vicinity of the bursts one plane could be seen heading in a westerly direction at altitude of about 5000 ft.. This plane was soon lost in the darkness of the west. Shortly thereafter a flash was seen on the stern of the KIMBERLY which was about 8000 yards northwest of the LANE. The KIMBERLY reported she had been hit by a suicider and the LANE proceeded at high speed to render assistance. Enroute a plane was sighted visually on port beam closing. This was picked up by the director and taken under fire by the 5" battery. At a range of 13000 yards the plane crashed. The plane was sighted visually by the fire control party, a single engine plane, coming in very low. The plane did not explode or burn in crashing. Whether it crashed due to hits received or to the pilot's efforts to dodge bursts and flying into the sea is not known.

2. On 6 April at 1839 the LANE was in company with TG 51.19 consisting of ESTES and WICHITA with the INGLEWOOD, LANE and KLEIN as anti-aircraft screen, the LANE being on starboard beam of formation. Many enemy planes had been in the area for some time, as well as friendly CAP. A single engine plane was sighted coming out of the clouds crossing the rear of the formation from port to starboard, range about 3000, altitude about 5000 ft.. Immediately on sighting plane it winged over and went into a dive directed at the WICHITA. It was taken under fire by the 5" battery and 40MM of the LANE, WICHITA and

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A16-3 COMMANDER DESTROYER DIVISION 110

Serial 003 c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.
8 May 1945.

[redacted]

Subject: Report on encounters with Suicide Planes.

ESTES. When about 200 yards from the WICHITA the plane was hit and disintegrated, one large part flying over the WICHITA and striking water forward of her. The plane did not explode or burn. Forty millimeter fire could be seen hitting the plane before it disintegrated with apparently no effect.

3. On 22 April the LANE had just taken station D-26 of inner transport screen. At 1915 enemy planes were reported to north and anti-aircraft fire could be seen in the that direction. The SG radar tracked the planes which appeared to be three in number. Two seemed to orbit in the vicinity of the firing and the third appeared to be closing the LANE. The sun had set so the visibility was very poor. At 1929 the plane was sighted on starboard bow, range 4000, altitude 2500. The ship was brought hard left and the plane was brought under fire. Although during the brief glance at the plane it appeared to wing over for a dive, it was soon lost from sight once firing commenced. Evidently the plane was driven off and headed southeast for shortly thereafter the SHEA which was to southward reported engaging a suicider which crashed close aboard her.

4. All of these attacks were by single planes. The tactics and defense measure were in all cases to bring the full battery to bear and commence firing as soon and as rapid as possible. The 5" battery with special fuzes appeared to be highly effective.

5. The enemy tactics varied, one being a low approach the other two fairly high approaches with a steep dive. However, as in the latter two cases visibility was poor due to darkness of cloud cover, these may have been surprise sightings by the planes resulting in emergency tactics.

6. None of the attacks were of the coordinated type, as experienced by the radar picket destroyers. Therefore, it is believed that the proceeding remarks contain little real information as compared to the observations of those ships which were engaged in multiple attacks.

/s/ W. H. PRICE.

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COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON SIXTY
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

OP6-60/A16-3
Serial 0017

7 May 1945.

SECRET

From: Commander Destroyer Squadron SIXTY.
To : Commander Task Force 54.

Subject: Weapons and Methods for Combating Suicide Attacks.

Reference: (a) CTF 51's 060900 May.
(b) CTF 54's 061420 May.

1. In accordance with references the following comments are submitted. These comments are based on my observation of attacks made on various classes of ships engaged in the OKINAWA Operation, including three on the squadron leader. The comments and discussion will embrace the following: I - Suicide Planes, II - Baka Bombs, III - Suicide Boats, IV - Comments and Recommendations.

I - SUICIDE PLANES

The fundamentals of defense against suicide planes have all been discussed and pointed out by numerous commanders. They are: (1) Early detection of attacking planes; (2) Maximum volume of gun fire by all AA weapons; (3) High speed. In addition to the regular use of air search radars, the high degree of effectiveness of our improved surface search radars in detection low flying planes must be exploited to the fullest. This is particularly true in areas where the SC types are land looked. Consideration should also be given to the advisability of using the Mk. 12 radar for a high angle search to supplement the regular search radars when enemy planes are suspected to be in the vicinity. It is imperative however that all hands remember there is no substitute for alert, well trained, lookouts. This further requires that lookouts stick to their assigned sectors, and that the ship be able to divide fire to handle simultaneous attacks from both sides. Much drill will be needed to do this effectively in the time allowed. Local control of guns must be emphasized, and more adequate facilities must be provided for local control of twin barrel 5"/38 mounts. It is considered that at least 50 % V.T. or influence fuzes should be employed. However the employment of the ship is a factor here. With ships in a large formation it may be impractical to employ V.T. without seriously endangering other ships. This will require flexibility in shifting of ammunition on the part of the gun crews. By loading upper hoists with Mk. 18 projectiles all guns may engage immediately, regardless of the bearing, and the battery will not be caught with empty hoists.

COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON SIXTY
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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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7 May 1945.

SECRET

Subject: Weapons and Methods for Combating Suicide Attacks.

If it proves safe to fire V.T., the delay is less than ten seconds. It is my opinion that with an early sighting a solution should always be attempted using the computer. The ship's gunnery doctrine should always provide for a barrage set-up until ranges are received.

The days of high pull-outs with two-to-three second fuze barrage are over; with present radar and fire control equipment it should be possible to obtain a tracking solution on suicide attacks at very short range, reserving close barrage for ranges under 2000 yards. Such a barrage may be set up without turning off the time motor by holding range with the range crank, facilitating rapid tracking of the next attack.

Plane attacks fall broadly into two classes: (a) Diving attacks, (b) Low level attacks. For a diving attack the ship should be kept broadside once the plane commits itself to the dive. The narrow beam offers much less target. Jap planes once in a dive appear to be stiff and hard to maneuver; relative motion does not appear to be too well understood by Jap pilots. This coupled with maximum volume of fire and the highest possible speed, together with a turn toward the plane as he nears the ship offer the best chance of beating this type of attack. Low level attacks particularly those just off the water are very dangerous. Here the plane has the entire length of the ship as a target. Again maximum volume of gunfire with the very highest speed must be used with as radical maneuvers as will still allow all guns to bear. Where two or three detached units are operating together and air attack is imminent, they should operate in column, preferably at not over 500 yards distance and at maximum speed. This will allow maximum effective gun fire and permits the ship to take plane under fire effectively when attacks develop on both sides.

Screening formations and cruising dispositions must be revised to permit maximum protection against suicide plane and Baka bomb attacks. When ships are operating in a small task for, I believe the only solution is to put all ships on the same circle with a distance of about 1500 yards. This will allow the O.T.C. to use highest practicable speed, gives greatest freedom of maneuver and allows maximum gun firesupport between ships under attack.

COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON SIXTY
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
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Serial 0017

7 May 1945.

~~SECRET~~

Subject: Weapons and Methods for Combating Suicide Attacks.

A.C.A.P. must be provided whenever possible. The C.A.P. and ship controlling must not permit all the C.A.P. to be drawn off by decoys while other planes come in for the attack. Low level attacks just off the water are going to be particularly difficult for the C.A.P. as they are so low the C.A.P. cannot dive on them.

II - BAKA BOMBS

These can be expected in increasing quantities. Once the Japs become more experienced in their use it can be expected that they will be released from the parent plane well outside the range of ship's guns, and also from land bases. Here the C.A.P. must get the parent plane before they are released. Once released, the speed, probable inexperience of the pilot and poor aiming sight used, they will probably be hard to control with a consequent good percentage of misses. A C.A.P. appears to be the best answer to this weapon.

III - SUICIDE BOATS

These also can be expected to be used as a major weapon from Now on by the Japs. These boats on dark nights are extremely hard to detect and present a nasty threat to transports, ships engaged in shore bombardment or otherwise anchored or moving at slow speed near shore. Present automatic AA weapons are not entirely satisfactory in repelling these boats, particularly when they are not discovered until they are in close. Guns often cannot be depressed sufficiently to hit and are cumbersome to handle. It is recommended that ships be equipped with 30 and 50 caliber machine guns placed along the side at suitable points which can be manned by deck patrols and bridge personnel. When danger of this type of attack exists extra lookouts and patrols should always be stationed at night. Consideration should be given to arming suitable men with hand grenades. The point is that thought should be given to developing additonal weapons for repelling this type of attack.

It should be noted that suicide boats usually attack in groups. With this in mind an alert lookout must always be maintained in unengaged sectors lest one boat sneak in undetected while another is being engaged. Due to their size and construction, it is almost impossible to detect suicide boats by radar. With this in mind it should be remembered that while smoke is an excellent defense

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7 May 1945.

[redacted]

Subject: Weapons and Methods for Combating Suicide Attacks.

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against planes at night it also provides suicide boats with a highly effective screen for their approach. For this reason smoke should only be used when threat of air attack is imminent.

Star shells along the coast provide excellent illumination. It is believed P. T. boats could be used to advantage well inshore to catch boats as they sortie. However they should not be used near other ships due to danger of mistaking them for the suicide boats.

IV - COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Much of the foregoing and the following recommendations are written from the destroyer point of view and concern the 2200 ton class DD. I believe the suicide plane, the Baka bomb and the suicide boat are going to become major Japanese weapons against ships as we approach the Empire. Therefore effective counter measures must be undertaken at once or our advance will be markedly slowed. The 2200 ton DD should have the after torpedo mount removed and a 40mm quad installed, or two twin 40mm. The quad is an exceedingly effective weapon, but to counter multiple attacks and to provide effective fire after loss of power, two twins might be superior. 20mm guns, wherever possible, must be replaced by 40mm, either single or double mounts. This applies particularly to the 20mm guns now installed below the bridge, port and starboard side. The 2200 DD should have the twins by No. 1 stack replaced by quads. The added fire power and additional 40mm forward would easily compensate for the more restricted field of fire of the quads.

Surface action except in isolated cases by surface ships is finished. Planes always get there first and sink the ships. Suicide planes must be destroyed before they hit. Nothing less than a 40mm will do this effectively. 2200 ton destroyers should be equipped immediately with Mk. 63 director to permit adequate control of 40mm guns. Every ship returning to a base should have additional 40mm's and the Mk. 63 director installed. This system is based on the Mk. 51 director and possesses the flexibility and high speed action of that director. In addition, it provides the following: Continuous radar range and range rate measurement; A target pick up device for getting on long range targets or targets that are observed and a blind tracking unit which makes possible accurate and continuous fire against targets which are hidden by darkness, fog, clouds or smoke.

COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON SIXTY
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

OP6-60/A16-3
Serial 0017

7 May 1945.

[redacted]

Subject: Weapons and Methods for Combating Suicide Attacks.

Under no circumstances should a destroyer be sent out on a detached mission alone if it can possibly be avoided. The advantage of mutual protection is obvious particularly in the case of a multiple attack where the problem of dividing the battery in half solved when two destroyers are present. Furthermore, in view of the large number of destroyers which have been sunk or put out of commission with a single hit of a suicide plane, the value of having another destroyer present to give assistance or rescue survivors is obvious.

For training, extensive use should be made of TDD drone units. Every combat ship of the 2100 ton DD class and larger should be supplied with them. I have used these units and they are the best thing the Navy has for AA training, particularly automatic weapons. Their production and installation should be given the highest priority.

B. R. HARRISON.

cc: ComDesPac

DD722/A16-3
Serial: 001

U.S.S. BARTON (DD722)

c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California.

[redacted]

7 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY ONE (Commander Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet)
Via : Commander Task Force FIFTY FOUR (Commander Battleship Squadron ONE).

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks - comments on.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Secret desp. 060900 May 1945.
(b) Com5thFleet Secret desp. 080200 February 1945.
(c) PacFlt Conf. Ltr. 1501-45.

1. This report is submitted in compliance with reference (a).

2. The opinions on which this report is based are the result of unforgettable experiences the BARTON has undergone during the Ormac, Mindoro and Lingayen Gulf Operations in the Philippines and during the entire Okinawa Operations to date. During these periods the BARTON has at some time been the direct target for four separate suicide plane attacks which crashed in each case from 10 to 100 feet from the ship after being shot out of control by heavy AA fire and avoided by radical high speed maneuvering. In addition, several other planes headed in the direction of this ship have been turned away by AA fire. At least 100 enemy suicide planes have been observed making attacks on other ships many of which were hit.

3. The Commanding Officer heartily concurs with the directives contained in references (b) and (c). The term "Open fire early, accurately and in volume" is definitely the best defense and optimum to be desired but which unfortunately due to other factors such as visibility and the number of guns which can be immediately brought to bear, can not always be attained. The term "and maneuver at high speed to bring maximum gunfire to bear and to avoid inevitable crash"is recommended to be added to previous quoted term, since it is believed that radical high speed maneuvering has been as instrumental in avoiding suicide plane crashes as any other factor. In three attacks on this ship the planes were afire and out of control but still headed directly for ship. Only high speed evasion caused these flaming planes to narrowly miss.

DD722/A16-3
Serial: 001.

U.S.S. BARTON (DD722)

c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California.

[redacted]

7 May 1945.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks - comments on.

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4. The weapons and highly effective ammunition available are entirely adequate if properly employed. VT fused projectiles leave little to be desired and should be employed in a ratio 3 to 1 with Mk. 18 type. 40 MM within 4000 yards have in most cases delivered the knock-out punch that disables the plane but does not keep it from coming at you. 20 MM are relatively ineffective compared to 5 inch and 40 MM and except for importance as a reliable standby weapon in case power fails on the others are not of great value and it is recommended that 50% be replaced by single, manual operated 40 MM. Since suicide planes have come to stay for the duration of the war with Japan it is recommended that destroyers having two torpedo mounts have one removed and replaced by one 40 MM quad. Surface torpedo actions have practically ended and the newer greater threat must be stressed.

5. High speed maneuvering during suicide plane attacks are next in importance to heavy, accurate gunfire. During four suicide attacks on BARTON speeds of from 20 to 25 knots were attained. Plane in each case was first placed on beam to promote maximum gunfire. As plane closed to about 500 yards full rudder toward plane was used. In each case the plane overshot since he had committed his point of aim, was partially disabled by gunfire and could not control his final dive. This action is recommended for high glide attacks. For low altitude attacks it is recommended that the turn be away so as to present a short aspect of ship's hull and a less vital area. It has been observed that most suiciders aim at bridge structure which when hit on a small ship may easily knock out the vital elements of the ship. A hit on the quarter abaft the engineer spaces is not as likely to result in fatal damage to ship.

6. Although not within the province of reference (a) it is desired to mention the subject of suicide craft, which it is believed as we close in on Japan will present a threat only second to planes. The BARTON has been involved in repelling several such attacks. In one instance during a very dark night a suicide boat closed in to about 50 feet before it was detected

DD722/A16-3
Serial: 001

U.S.S. BARTON (DD722)

c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California

[redacted] 7 May 1945.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks - comments on.

and was believed to have dropped charges which failed to detonate. Despite a great number of 40 MM and 20 MM guns on board not one will bear on a close target. To correct this problem two .50 cal. and two .30 cal. machine guns were obtained. At night one .50 cal. machine gun is mounted aft on fantail and another on stem bull nose. The two .30 cal. machine guns are mounted on each side of bridge. It is believed that they will materially assist in repelling close suicide craft and swimmer attacks and are recommended for portable installation on all destroyers of this task group.

cc: CDS 60

E. B. DEXTER.

0084

11 May 1945.

[redacted]

From: Commander Task Group 51.15 (Commander Amphibious Group SEVEN).
To: Commander Task Force 51 (Commander Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet).

Subject: Intelligence Reports Regarding Attacks on Three (3) Ships in the OKINAWA Area from 28 April to 9 May 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Two (2) copies each of reports on the following ships: PINKNEY (APH 2), OBERRENDER (DE 344) and ENGLAND (DE 635).

1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded herewith for information.

2. Subject reports are based on interrogations of Commanding Officers and others attached to ships attacked by suicide planes.

THOMAS N. HAMILTON
By Direction

CC:
Com5thFleet (with enclosure)
CinCPOA (JICPOA) (with enclosure).

99

11 May 1945

SECRET

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGowan, USNR.
To: The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on PINKNEY (APH 2).

1. Time of Attack: 1928, 28 April 1945 (Sunset was at 1901).

2. Place: In Berth E-36 in KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

3. Type of Attack: Dusk suicide attack by 1 single-engine plane, hit PINKNEY amidships.

4. Results: Ship severely damaged. Casualties: 52 (KIA 22 - WIA 11 - MIA 19).

5. Description of Attack:

(a) At the time of the attack the PINKNEY was in Berth E-36 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage and was heading approximately due east. Its bow pointed toward TOKASHIKI, the open sea was on its starboard beam and HOKAJI was astern of it. The MT. MCKINLEY (AGC 7), in Berth E-37, was on the port side of the PINKNEY and was about 500 to 600 yards distant, on a relative bearing of about 225° from the PINKNEY. The Condition, "Flash BLUE, Control GREEN" was in effect.

(b) At about 1928 men aboard the MT. MCKINLEY saw sporatic 20mm Tracer fire coming from ships near the southern entrance to the anchorage, in the vicinity of Berths E-96 and E-97 (both about 3000 yards southwest of the PINKNEY). The line of fire was approximately due south, toward the open sea, and was low over the water, the tracers striking the water about 800 to 1500 yards from the point of origin. Only 1 or 2 guns were firing.

(c) An instant later a single-engine monoplane was sighted at a distance of about 3500 yards from the PINKNEY and at an altitude of approximately 300 feet. The plane was approaching the anchorage from the southeast on a course of approximately 030° True and at a speed of about 200 MPH (bearing 210° True from PINKNEY). Visibility at this time and in this direction was such that a plane could be seen at a distance of 2 to 4 miles.

(d) The plane continued on a course of 030° T. decreasing altitude slightly. AA fire (20mm only) from the vicinity of Berth E-96 increased to possibly 10 guns until the ship in E-9 (about 1 mile southeast of E-96) came into the line of

fire and caused the firing to be discontinued. The Captain of the ship in E-9 was wounded by some of the AA fire. A destroyer, lying off the PINKNEY's starboard side, at a distance of 1500 yards, also opened fire on the enemy plane as it approached, the tracer travelling low over the water. The plane continued its run, passed over the fantail of the destroyer and headed for the PINKNE The plane was probably at an altitude of about 100 feet or less at this time.

(e) About 25 to 35 seconds after the plane was first sighte it crashed into the PINKNEY. It struck the ship on the starboard side amidships, between the 2 stack davits on the boat deck just above the main deck level. The bomb exploded and a large fire resulted. The PINKNEY was almost obscured by enveloping smoke and reddish flame. From a beam view, an area of approximately 60 to 100 feet of the ship's length was immediately seen to be burning furiously. Very little debris was thrown up.

(f) Most of the crew were attending a movie in the Number 5 hold (2 decks below the main deck and about 50 feet aft of the superstructure) and this circumstance prevented many additional casualties. The concussion from the bomb explosion travelled downward and tore a large cone-shaped hole in the middle of the ship, which extended several decks below. Two men in the engine room (5 decks below the spot where the plane struck) were killed by the concussion. The plane did not strafe during its approach.

(g) No AA fire from the PINKNEY was seen. From the plane's angle of approach and the position of the PINKNEY, it appears that the plane aimed for the first large ship in its path. Some observers aboard the MT. MCKINLEY thought that many men needlessly jumped overboard after the explosion(even men on the forecastle jumped from the ship).

(h) The plane was not positively identified. It was described as a single-engine plane, with a low wing and a radial engin and without fixed landing gear. The wing had slight dihedral.

6. OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

(a) the following information was supplied by the CIC Officer on watch aboard the MT. MCKINLEY at the time of the attack.

"1921 TBS from Number 7: 'We see a low-flying plane. Cs 090.' (Number 7 is about 6 miles southwest of Berths of MT. MCKINLEY and PINKNEY).

1925 TBS from Baker 6: 'Low-flying plane 180° true, 4 miles from Baker 6.' (Baker 6 is about 9 miles southwest of Berths of MT. MCKINLEY and PINKNEY).

1927 We (CIC) had IFF Code 6 at 180° True, 20 miles, Cs 130.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on PINKNEY (APH 2).

- -

1928 Plane hit PINKNEY.

Our Code 6, picked up at 1927, jived perfectly with the 2 visible reports. Evidently Bandit turned north towards us immediately after Baker 6 sighted him, instead of continuing on S.E. course and we picked up a first indicationcan a night fighter at 180° True, 20 miles, mistaking this for the bogey."

(b) It appears that the plane made a low approach over the water and used the islands of the Western KERAMA RETTO to conceal his final approach to the anchorage and to avoid radar detection.

7. The foregoing information was obtained on 30 April 1945 from various personnel attached to the PINKNEY and from the other sources indicated in this report.

HAROLD X. MCGOWAN

AMPHIBIOUS GROUP SEVEN

SECRET

From: Lieutenant Harold X. MCGOWAN, USNR.
To: The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on the U.S.S. OBERRENDER (DE 344).

1. Time of Attack: 1830I/9 May 1945.

2. Place: In Station A-34 A.

3. Type of Attack: Suicide attack by single JUDY approaching from high altitude and diving at 30°-45°.

4. Results: Ship severely damaged. Casualties: 63 (KIA 3 - MIA 5 - WIA 55, including minor injuries).

Description of Attack.

5. At 1844I the OBERRENDER was on a course of 225° T., at that time a bogey was reported at a distance of 35 miles, bearing 300° T. It was tracked to 17 miles from the OBERRENDER (bogey still bearing 300° T.), at which time the Fighter Director Destroyer in the area announced that the bogey's altitude was 22,000 feet and that CAP "had been taken off, because he's too high." The bogie was then tracked to a distance of 3 miles from the OBERRENDER, on a bearing of 270° T.

6. At approximately 1850I a JUDY was sighted visually, coming out of the sun, at a distance of 7000-8000 yards, relative bearing 090°, altitude 4000-5000 feet. At this time the OBERRENDER was making 21 knots and was in the midst of a turn to port in order to begin the northerly leg of its patrol course (045° T. - 225° T.). The JUDY was off the starboard beam, approaching in a steep dive (estimated 30°-45° dive angle).

7. The ship opened fire with its 5" guns at a range of 7000 yards. The plane was "travelling like a bat out of hell." The Commanding Officer of the OBERRENDER estimated its speed to be 400 MPH. At a distance of 3000 yards, the JUDY's engine "seemed to disintegrate" from repeated AA hits, but it continued to approach. Its wing was knocked off (probably by 5" fire) just before it struck the ship. The plane maintained the same steep dive all during its approach. It crashed into the OBERRENDER amidship, at Gun # 24 (20mm mount) on the starboard side. Its bomb (probably 500 lb.) penetrated the main deck and exploded in the fire room. The bomb appeared to be of a delayed action type. This ship was seriously damaged and was towed to KERAMA RETTO. No other enemy planes were seen during or after this attack.

8. It was believed at first that the suicide plane was a JAKE, but part of the plane's fabric, recovered after the crash, showed that it was a JUDY. The characters of the fabric indicated that it was to be used on the Japanese plane "SUISEI" (meaning "COMET" and known as the JUDY). The model number was blacked out. The fabric manufacturer was the TAKIO Aluminum Company, Ltd., and

SECRET

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on the U.S.S. OBERRENDER (DE 344)

the fuselage manufacturer was ADOMI. No date of manufacture was indicated. The suicide plane was apparently the new radial engine version of the JUDY, which may be especially adapted for suicide missions by the installation of a special device for arming the bomb while still in the bomb bay.

9. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the OBERRENDER on 10 May 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. MCGOWAN.

11 May 1945

[redacted]

From: Lieutenant Harold X. MC GOWAN, USNR.
To: The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on ENGLAND (DE 635).

1. Time of Attack: 1900, 9 May 1945.

2. Place: In Station B-11, bearing 253° T. distant 34 miles from Point BOLO.

3. Type of Attack: Suicide attack by 1 VAL, approached ship in 15° to 20° glide. Crashed on starboard side below bridge.

4. Results: Ship severely damaged. Casualties: 54 (KIA 11 - WIA 21 - MIA 22). Ship's total complement: 200.

5. Description of Attack:

(a) at 1856 a VAL was sighted off the ENGLAND's starboard bow at a distance of 4 miles and at an altitude of 600 feet. It was in a shallow dive (15° to 20°). The ship was making 23.5 knots at this time and was on a course of 215° T. The ENGLAND opened fire at 7000 yards and engaged in evasive maneuvers. The plane estimated its run and at a distance of 1000 yards, it was on the starboard quarter at an altitude of 200 feet. The ship was turning left and the plane was following it along the starboard side in the same shallow dive (15° to 20°) At this time the VAL was seen to be smoking from AA hits and it was on fire as it came in. A wheel was also knocked off during the run.

(b) The plane crashed into the ship on the starboard side, its port wing hitting the forward boat davit and the engine and bomb entering the wardroom below the bridge. The bomb struck the deck of the wardroom, was deflected through a small bulkhead into the adjoining Officers' Country and there exploded (immediately above the forward mess hall). A large fire resulted. It was estimated to be a 250 pound bomb with 1/10 second delayed action fuze. The ship was severly damaged but was able to proceed to the KERAMA RETTO under its own power.

(c) About 1 minute after the ship was hit, 2 CORSAIRS splashed a Jap plane off the port quarter, at a distance of 3 to 4 miles, altitude 1000 feet.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on ENGLAND (DE 635).

6. Other Attacks on ENGLAND (Not Related to Suicide Attack).

(a) 0105, 28 April 1945 - BETTY splashed making Torpedo Attack.

At 0105 on 28 April 1945 the ENGLAND sighted a BETTY at 3000 yards, Relative bearing 270°, altitude 25 to 30 feet. The BETTY was splashed at a distance of 800 yards off the port beam, while making a torpedo attack on the ENGLAND. Special Influence Ammunition was credited with destroying the Jap plane, The moon was full at the time of this attack.

(b) 2335, 27 April 1945 - Suicide TOJO Makes Near Miss.

This attack occurred at the same time the RALPH TALBOT (DD 390) was hit. The moon was full. The ENGLAND was in Station A-37A. Two of 4 Jap planes reported in the area were sighted visually at a distance of 4 miles, altitude 1000 feet, relative bearing 245°. One of these planes struck the TALBOT. TOJO #2 dove on the ENGLAND almost vertically (080°) from astern, at a speed of 450 knots. It crashed in the water about 20 feet off the fantail on the starboard side, but did not explode. Immediately thereafter, another suicide plane crashed into the TALBOT.

7. Special Characteristics and Recommendations.

(a) The Commanding Officer of the ENGLAND believed that the suicide TOJO dove on the ship from astern in order to use the wake as a guide in his dive. He endorsed the tactics of steaming at 10 knots at night in order to prevent the creation of a tell-tale wake. Enemy planes have passed directly over the ship, apparently without seeing it, when it was making 10 knots at night.

(b) At the time of the suicide TOJO attack, one of the enemy planes (not the attacking TOJO) flashed a blinking white light off the stern of the ship for about 15 seconds, apparently in an effort to induce the ship to open fire and thus reveal its position. The following night another enemy plane showed a blinking, orange-colored light off the ship's stern at an altitude of 1400 feet and a distance of 2 miles. The light flashes lasted for about 10 seconds, then the plane disappeared.

(c) At the time the ENGLAND was hit by the suicide VAL, it had the following armament:

(1) Three 3" guns.
(2) Ten 20 mm.
(3) One 1.1".

AMPHIBIOUS GROUP SEVEN

~~SECRET~~

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on ENGLAND (DE 635).

About 6 months prior to the attack, it had been authorized to be refitted with:

(1) One Quad Mount of 40mm (Replacing the 1.1" gun).
(2) Two twin 40MM guns (Replacing the Torpedo Tubes).

It was to retain the three 3" guns and the two 20mm guns. The Commanding Officer felt that the ship might have splashed the suicide VAL if it had been equipped with the additional fire power authorized.

(d) About 1½ months ago the Commanding Officer saw 1 DE in ULITHI with its torpedo tubes removed and 40mm guns substituted. He also saw another DE, similarly equipped, in another area. It is planned to refit all DE's in the same manner.

8. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company on 10 May 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. MCGOWAN.

A16 kn

N-0014

12 May 1945

[redacted]

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on:
ComLCI(G)Gr 16 ltr.
A16/rls, serial 004,
of 9 May 1945.

From: Commander LCI(G) Flotilla THREE.
To: Commander Task Force FIFTY-ONE.

Subject: Suicide Planes, Weapons and Maneuvers against.

1. Forwarded.

2. Recommendations and comments are concurred in.

M. J. MANALAPHY

cc: ComLCI(G)Gr 16.

A16/rls
Serial 004

LCI(G) GROUP 16
FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

SECRET

9 May 1945

From: Commander Task Unit 52.17.1 (Lt. Comdr. R.S. RICKABAUGH, Com LCI(G) Grp 16, LCI(G) 558 Flagship)
To: Commander Task Force 51 (Vice Admiral R. K. TURNER, ComPhibsPac, USS ELDORADO, Flagship)
Via: Commander Task Unit 52.9.2 (Comdr. M. J. MANALAPHY, Com LCI(G) Flot 3, USS LC(FF) 627 Flagship).

Subject: Suicide Planes, Weapons and Maneuvers against.

Reference: C.T.F. 51 Secret Despatch Ø6Ø9ØØ.

1. C.T.U. 52.17.1, while on board LCI(G) 558 and while patrolling stations 116 and 117 in company with LCI(G) 559, witnessed the successful splashing of an enemy plane as it leveled off preparatory to making a crash dive on the LCI(G) 558. This action occurred on the afternoon of 6 April during which time ships in the area North of IE SHIMA and West of OKINAWA proper were subjected to the constant threat of enemy plane attack. The work of the CAP was magnificent. No less than thirty (30) enemy planes were observed shot down in the vicinity referred to above during the afternoon, without the observed loss of a single American plane. They were alert, maintained a constant and complete patrol, and welcomed every opportunity to join the enemy. Undoubtedly their prompt, efficient and effective coverage reduced to a minimum the losses suffered by our ships. In spite of this coverage, a concerted attack directed against two DMS's operating off the Northwest tip of OKINAWA resulted in serious damage to both ships and the abandonment of the DMS 22. It was while proceeding to this area to pick up survivors that the LCI(G) 558 and 559 received their attack. LCI(G) 559 was approximately 600 yards off the port quarter of LCI(G) 558, weather clear with good visibility, when the plane was first observed off the port bow of the LCI(G) 558, heading towards the LCI(G) 559 at an altitude of 50 feet, distance 6000 yards. LCI(G) 558 opened fire at 4000 yards with 40 MM, followed immediately by the 559. Both ships maneuvered to head towards the plane, and maintained a constant fire of 20MM, 40MM, and 50 caliber. Several attempts were made by the plane to level off for a dive on the 559. The constant fire apparently threw the pilot off balance, he circled the 559 and was leveled off headed for the 558 when his left wing tipped and he crashed into the sea approximately 300 yards distance.

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SECRET

9 May 1945

Subject: Suicide Planes, Weapons and Maneuvers against.

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2. From this experience and the experience gained while patrolling areas 116 and 117 it is felt several important lessons were learned as follows:

(a) A strong and effective CAP is probably the greatest single defensive measure.

(b) Ships of the size and type of LCI(G)s should always operate in company in potentially dangerous patrol zones. If operating in twos, one should be stationed on either quarter of the lead ship at a minimum distance of 600 yards. If operating three together, station one on each quarter of the lead ship at same minimum distance. This type of formation minimizes the possibility of a surprise attack, makes the selection of a target more difficult for the enemy pilot, and provides for mutual AA support.

(c) If operating in a patrol area backed by a DD or DE screen it is strongly recommended that these ships be closed by LCI(G)s during twilight periods for the same advantages of mutual AA support, multiplicity of targets, and the minimizing of the possibility of surprise.

(d) When attack is imminent, head towards the target maneuvering to keep target on the bow and thus make available the greatest concentration of fire power.

(e) Care must be exercised in control of 20MM and 50 cal. fire in order that magazines are not depleted at most critical phase of the attack.

(f) It is considered advisable to open up with 40 MM beyond effective range to alert surrounding ships and friendly aircraft that may be in the vicinity.

(g) The developments of some form of barrage fire, through which the plane would be forced to fly, would probably prove an effective counter measure.

(h) From many observed suicide attempts it is apparent that the pilot must be killed to effectively counter his attack. A plane in flames or badly damaged with the pilot still conscious, continues to be a threat and in many cases the attack is driven home. For this reason continuous fire until the plane crashes

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into the water is essential.

(i) There is no substitute for a continuous 360 degree alert watch at all times, including flash white periods. The natural human tendency to concentrate attention towards an active sector must be curbed.

(j) Rigid fire discipline must be observed at all times with control centered in a capable officer well qualified in plane recognition.

R. S. RICKABAUGH,
Lt. Comdr. USNR
Commanding.

111

A6

0080

MAY 11, 1945

[redacted]

From: Commander Task Group 51.15 (Commander Amphibious Group SEVEN).
To : Commander Task Force 51 (Commander Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet).

Subject: Intelligence Reports Regarding Attacks on Fifteen (15) Ships in the OKINAWA Area from 26 April to 4 May 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Two (2) copies each of reports on the following ships: BOWERS (DE 637), RATHBURNE (APD-25), WILSON (DD-408), TALUGO (AO), RALPH TALBOT (DD-390), H. A. WILEY (DM-29), HAGGARD (DD-555), DALY (DD-519), LITTLE (DD-803), SHEA (DM-30), GAYETY (AM-239), HOBSON (DMS-26), PRINGIE (DD-477), MARYLAND (BB-46), and WADSWORTH (DD-516).

1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded herewith for information.

2. Subject reports are based on interrogations of Commanding Officers and others attached to ships attacked by suicide planes and BAKA Bombs.

THOMAS N. HAMILTON

cc:
Com5thFleet (with enclosure)
CincPOA (JICPOA)(with enclosure)

112

9 May 1945.

[redacted]

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOWAN, USNR.
To : Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on BOWERS (DE-637).

1. Time of Attack: 0945/16 April 1945.

2. Place of Attack: In Station D-42.

3. Type of Attack: Coordinated suicide attack by two VAL's. One splashed. One hit ship.

4. Results: Ship severly damaged. Casualties: 105 (KIA: 39, WIA: 56, MIA: 10).

5. Description of Attack:

(a) At 0940, two VAL's were sighted off the port beam, at a distance of three miles and an altitude of about 100 feet. The BOWERS was on a course of 200° T., at this time. The planes were closing the ship in level flight. The BOWERS opened fire at a range of 3500 yards and the planes spread. VAL #1 moved to the port quarter and began to weave back and forth. VAL #2 continued to close the ship on the port beam and was splashed at a distance of about 1000-1500 yards.

(b) VAL #2 continued to orbit at a distance of about 2000 yards. It then made a run (20° glide) on the ship from the port quarter and from an altitude of about 150 feet. Some said that the plane strafed the ship during the approach. The TALBOT's AA hit the VAL repeatedly. The plane missed the ship and passed over the fantail between Gun #3 and the 1.1" mount, at an altitude of about fifty feet. A bomb (estimated 200 pounds) was seen under the VAL's belly. The plane almost hit the water on the starboard side, but it pulled out of its dive, levelled off on the starboard beam and opened to 1500-2000 yards from the TALBOT. The VAL then travelled toward the bow on a parallel course, never flying above bridge level.

(c) When off the starboard bow, it turned to its left, reversed its course and come in from an altitude of about 75 feet on a relative bearing of 125°. The plane had been hit numerous times and absorbed more punishment during its final run, but no visible evidence of damage was noted.

(C O P Y)

Subject: Suicidd Plane Attack on BOWERS (DE-637).

(d) The VAL crashed into the forward bulkhead of the Flying Bridge, on a level with the Radar Room. The bomb penetrated the bulkhead and exploded at deck level several feet beyond. It may have been a delayed action bomb. The ship was severly damaged and numerous casualties resulted.

6. Other Observations and Comments:

(a) In a dawn attack on the same day, the BOWERS splashed a Jap plane about 200 yards off the port quarter. It was not identified.

(b) In both attacks the enemy plane used IZENA SHIMA, about 7 miles to the north of Station D-42, to conceal their approach from the north.

(c) Nothing of intelligence significense was recovered from the plane or the Jap pilot.

(d) Some thought that the two suicide VAL's approached from the south, using IE SHIMA as cover and were first sighted off the starboard quarter at a distance of 10,000 yards, then circled in front of the ship to the port quarter, where VAL #2 dove over the fantail.

7. The foregoing information was obtained from various members of ship's company aboard the BOWERS on 19 April 1945, in KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

(C O P Y)

9 May 1945

[redacted]

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOWAN, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on RATHBURNE (APD-25).

1. Time of Attack: 2207, 27 April 1945.

2. Place: In Station C-28 (Inner Transport Screen), bearing 270°T, distance 11,500 yards from Point BOLO.

3. Type of Attack: Moonlight Suicide Attack by Possible TONY.

4. Results: Ship severely damaged; no personnel casualties.

5. Description of Attack:

(a) At 2207 a Jap plane (possible TONY) was sighted off the RATHBURNE's port quarter, bearing 200° relative, range 700 to 800 yards, altitude 50 to 60 feet(mast height). It was travelling very fast (180 knots) and parallel the ship's course until it crashed a point on the port beam. At this time it was on a level with the flying bridge (30 feet high). As soon as the ship opened fire, the plane dipped its right wing, which hit the water, and the plane skidded into the ship on the port side. The left wing went flying over the forecastle. The plane hit about 2 feet above the waterline. It threw up a sheet of flame that extended as far aft as the engine room. The plane penetrated the hull and caused a hole 6 to 7 feet fore and aft, and 9 to 10 feet high. There was also a smaller hole below the waterline, which resulted when the bomb penetrated the hull. It passed diagonally through the ship and emerged on the starboard side. It exploded in the water. A small fire developed on the ship, but it was quickly brought under control. There were no personnel casualties.

6. Special Comments and Observations:

(a) Some said that the ship might not have been hit, if it had not opened fire. The plane was travelling down the port beam "like a bat out of hell" when the ship fired on it.

(b) The moon was on the port beam at the time the ship was hit. It was very bright and it was possible to read a compass on deck without artificial light.

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on RATHBURNE (APD-25).

(c) The ship was circling to the left at a speed of 20 knots when hit.

(d) Raid number 5, consisting of about 4 to 5 planes, and probably including the plane which hit the RATHBURNE, came in from the west, dropping window and travelling low at a speed of 160 to 180 knots. They split into three groups at a range of 15 to 17 miles from the RATHBURNE and one plane attacked while the other 2 groups probably headed east for the Transport Area. The plane attacking the RATHBURNE probably passed across its bow at some distance then circled astern for its final run.

(e) The plane was not positively identified. It was described by some as single-engine plane, with a pointed nose, possible inline engine and a low, small wing with rounded wing tips. Others said it had a radial engine, a heavy, bulky fuselage and a very wide wing. Part of the retractable landing gear was recovered aboard the RATHBURNE.

7. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the RATHBURNE on 28 April 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

COPY L/nh

[redacted]

9 May 1945

M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOWAN, USNR.
to : Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on WILSON (DD 408) and TALUGA (AO)

1. Time of attack: 0850, 16 April 1945.

2. Place: 6 to 7 miles south of KERAMA RETTO.

3. Time of Attack: Simultaneous suicide attacks by 2 probable SONIAS on WILSON and TALUGA (6 miles apart).

4. Results: WILSON superficially damaged; casualties: 9 (KIA 5 - WIA 4). TALUGA damage and casualties unknown. Only WILSON personnel interrogated.

5. Description of attack:

(a) At 0845, 16 April 1945, the WILSON and the PUTMAN (DD 757) were about 6 to 7 miles south of the entrance to the KERAMA RETTO. They were screening the entry of TU 50.9.5 (AND 13, etc.). The WILSON was on a course of 045°T and was making 12 knots. The PUTMAN was approximately 3 miles to the eastward.

(b) Bogies were reported on a bearing of 225°T, distant 12 miles. Shortly thereafter 2 SONIAs were sighted visually, bearing 170°T, range about 9 miles and altitude 7000 feet. They were off the WILSON's starboard beam and were on a parallel, easterly course at this time (the WILSON had swung her beam to the right to meet them). The WILSON was now making 25 knots. The SONIAs closed to about 6000 to 7000 yards and SONIA #1 then circled to its left and dove directly on the TALUGA, a tanker, which was directly ahead of it and about 6 miles off the WILSON's starboard quarter. SONIA #1 struck the tanker amidships.

(c) SONIA #2 turned sharply to the left (a wingover) and the WILSON shifted its fire to this plane. When SONIA #2 turned toward the WILSON, it was about 6000 to 7000 yards off the starboard beam and at an altitude of 4000 feet. Both SONIAs made their final runs in steep dives, starting at 45° and increasing to 60°. SONIA #2 which attacked the WILSON, levelled off at about 200 yards from the ship and at 1000 altitude. The plane crashed in the water about 50 yards off the starboard quarter, between the 3-inch gun and the 40 mm mount. It is not known whether the plane was splashed by AA or as a result of pilot failure. The plane disintegrated and the parachute sailed through the air, opened and landed in the water about 200 yards of the port side. Part of the pilot accompanied it for a short distance.

C O P Y

AMPHIBIOUS GROUP SEVEN

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on WILSON (DD 408) and TALUGA (AO)

(d) The bomb (250 lb) pentrated the hull at frame 144, about 1 foot above the water line on the starboard side. The base plub in the tail assembly exploded, but the rest of the bomb did not. Powder cases in the ship's number 3 magazine were detonated by shrapnel and 5 men were killed in this magazine. The propellor and hub were the only other parts of the plane recovered. It was a 3-bladed propellor, with a variable pitch. These parts landed at the base of one of the starboard 40 mm guns. The plane did not have elliptical wings. Its wings tips were squarish. It was believed to be a SONIA, and not a VAL.

6. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the WILSON on 19 April 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO. Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN,

[redacted]

9 May 1945.

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGowan, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on RALPH TALBOT (DD390).

1. Time of Attack: 2201 to 2204, 27 April 1945.

2. Place: In station A-364 (bearing 330°T, distant 13 miles from Point SLO).

3. Type of Attack: Coordinated suicide attack at night (moonlight) by 2 single-engine planes; 1 partial hit, 1 near miss.

4. Results: Ship severely damaged. Casualties: 9 (KIA 5 - WIA 4).

5. Description of Attack:

(1) Three (3) enemy planes were sighted off the port quarter, at a distance of 3 to 4 miles and an altitude of 1000 to 1500 feet, just below some clouds. At this time the ship was on a course of 065°T and the planes bore 280°T. The moon was full and was almost at its zenith. It was approximately due east, off the TALBOT's starboard bow. The planes were seen only momentarly and then disappeared into the clouds. One of them was showing running lights. Immediately before the planes were spotted, "very light pink lights" were seen in the same position. They blinked on and off, each light lasting for 2 to 3 seconds. It was thought that they might have been signalling lights, used between the planes.

(2) A few minutes later (at 2201) the roar of a plane motor was heard and a single engine enemy plane was spotted in a steep dive (30° to 40°) about 900 yards dead ahead of the ship. The plane was then at an altitude of less than 300 feet and was travelling very fast. The ship was on a course of 090°T at this time, was making 20 knots and was weaving to the left. The plane missed the ship, and sped down the starboard side and its right wing struck part of the Number 4 gun on the starboard quarter and caused superficial damage to the gun platform. The plane's engine landed near the ship at the water line and 2 holes, extending to the end of the bilge, were later found in the ship's hull. The larger hole was 8 feet by 10 feet. West of the compartments aft, including 5 magazines, were flooded. The plane bounced off the water and skidded astern of the ship. It burned briefly on the water but did not explode. Gasoline was sprayed over the stern of the ship and a small fire started, but it was quickly extinguished. The plane was not identified. It was described as a single-engine plane, with radial engine, low wing, square wing tips and without visible landing gear. No bomb was observed.

AMPHIBIOUS GROUP SEVEN

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on RALPH TALBOT (DD 390).

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(3) 2204 - Second Suicide Attack by Same Type Plane.

Three (3) minutes after the first plane crashed, another plane, similar to the first in appearance, was spotted off the starboard quarter, at a distance of 200 yards and an altitude of 150 feet. The plane was closing the ship in a 20° glide. The plane missed the ship and crashed in the water on the port side, very close aboard, near Gun Number 4. No explosion occurred.

6. Between the first and second attacks on the TALBOT, the jed enemy plane dove on the ENGLAND (DE 635), which was in Patrol Station A-371, directly ahead of the TALBOT. It was not known whether this plane actually struck the ENGLAND.

7. Special Comments and Recommendations:

(1) The enemy planes dropped "window" during their approach to conceal the break-up of the formation (window dropped 8, 10, and 12 miles).

(2) After the TALBOT had been hit, "blinking lights", similar to those seen just before the attack, were again observed in the distance.

(3) The enemy planes definitely picked the strongest target first, since the TALBOT was the only destroyer in a group of 4 ships in the area.

8. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the TALBOT on 28 April 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. MCGOWAN.

9 May 1945.

~~SECRET~~

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGowan, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: BAKA Bomb Attacks on H. A. WILEY (DM 29).

Enclosure: (A) One (1) copy (2 pages) of WILEY's Firing Sheet for Subject Attacks.

1. Time of Attacks: 0850 to 0913, 4 May 1945.

2. Place: Enroute from station 149 to Radar Picket Number 12 (approximately midway between 2 stations at time of attacks).

3. Type of Attacks: Ship attacked by two (2) BAKA Bombs and three (3) JILLS within twenty-one (21) minutes.

4. Results: No damage; no casualties.

5. Description of Attacks:

(a) 0858 - Attack by BAKA Bomb

(1) At 0858 a BETTY was sighted astern of the WILEY at a range of approximately 4000 yards and an altitude of 1500 feet. It was closing the WILEY at a speed of 150 to 175 knots. At a relative bearing of 175 degrees from the ship, a streak of fire, followed immediately by a stream of smoke, about forty (40) to fifty (50) feet long, was observed beneath the BETTY's fuselage. A "little black object, just a dot" was then seen under and in front of the BETTY. It was impossible to distinguish any of the details of this "object".

(2) The BAKA Bomb was first sighted visually off the WILEY's starboard quarter (bearing 170° relative), at a distance of 200 yards and an altitude of 40 feet. It was in a shallow glide, moving forward along the ship's starboard side and almost paralleling the WILEY's course. It then banked to its left and made a run on the starboard beam. It was observed about 10 feet over the water in a steep glide (35°), about 100 yards from the WILEY. It crashed in the water and exploded about 15 to 50 yards off the starboard beam. It was not shot down.

(3) The small twin-fins and rudders and the high-set horizontal tail plane were noticed by one officer. The BAKA Bomb travelled at "terrific speed" during its approach. One man estimated that only 10 seconds elapsed from the time the stream of smoke was seen under the BETTY to the moment when the BAKA Bomb exploded in the water. The nose appeared "conical-shaped, but distinctly pointed". The BAKA Bomb was light grey in color and had stubby wings.

(4) The BETTY was shot down by the WILEY's 5-inch and 40 mm fire about 4000 yards off its starboard bow.

(b) 0904 - Second BAKA Bomb Attack

(1) The second BAKA Bomb was sighted off the WILEY's starboard beam at a distance of approximately 4000 yards and an altitude of 150 feet. The ship was making 28 knots at this time. It approached at extremely high speed, estimated at 750 knots by a Gunnery Officer who was tracking it in the Plotting Room. The dial on the speed computer "hit the stop indicator (450 knots) with a bang". The WILEY opened fire at a range of 4000 yards and pieces of the wings and fuselage were seen to fly off, as the shells struck the BAKA Bomb. At 2500 yards the Bomb suddenly dipped toward the water, as the result of AA fire bursting on or near it. Another dip occurred at 2000 yards. As it closed the ship, it was travelling about 10 feet over the water. The target angle was $\emptyset$ all during its approach. It did not maneuver or deviate from its straight course. It is believed that a 5-inch shell, bursting nearby the BAKA Bomb, finally caused it to splash about 100 yards off the starboard quarter. It did not explode. The plane bounced when it first struck the water and part of it, including the warhead, scattered in the direction of the fantail. Some said that "it looked like a TONY at first". It was also described as "glinting" and being "very shiny".

(c) 0910 to 0911 - Attack by Two (2) JILLs.

(1) About 6 minutes after the second BAKA Bomb attack, the WILEY assisted in splashing a JILL about 2000 yards off the port beam. It approached about 30 feet over the water. A CORSAIR dove on the JILL from astern and completed the splash. Three (3) minutes later a second low-flying JILL was shot down by the WILEY off the starboard bow at about the same distance as the first. This JILL was carrying a torpedo.

6. Special Observations:

(a) At the time of the attack, visibility was about 7 miles. A light haze covered the area and a pall of brown gunfire smoke hung over the water. Both the BETTY and the BAKA Bombs appear to have made full use of this cover during the attack.

(b) The BAKA Bomb was tracked on the SC Radar at extremely high speed from an approximate initial range of 7000 yards to within 200 yards of the WILEY. Four (4) other Bogies were on the screen at the same time, at ranges of 8000 to 12000 yards, within 20° of the BAKA Bomb's pip.

[redacted]

Subject: BAKA Bomb Attacks on H.A. WILEY (DM 29).

7. Recommendations:

The Commanding Officer and other officers of the WILEY made the following recommendations:

(a) Ships should fire a fixed barrage at BAKA Bomb with 2-second fuze setting, using both AA Common and Special (VT) Projectiles.

(b) Tracer fire should be used in both 40 mm and 20 mm guns, instead of trying to track the fast-moving BAKA Bomb with the Mark 51 Director or the Mark KIV sight.

(c) Ships should be on the alert against BAKA Bomb attacks, when slow-flying, twin-engine enemy bombers, especially KITTYs, are observed circling and maneuvering in the vicinity and dodging in and out of the clouds.

(d) A General Information Pamphlet for Radar Pickets should be published and disseminated.

(e) In Radar Picket Stations an agreement sould be made that, in the event of simultaneous air attacks from both sides, the leading destroyer will take under fire targets to starboard with its main battery, and the second destroyer will fire on targets to port.

(f) Radar Pickets should patrol their stations at a speed of 10 knots at night, unless Bogies are in the area.

(g) Radar Picket ships should maintain a speed of 10 knots at night and 15 knots during the day until the enemy plane is within a range of 10000 yards. At that time speed should be increased to 25 to 28 knots.

(h) All lookouts and other stations should be kept as fully advised as the Captain of the current situation during attacks.

(i) Ships should automatically go to General Quarters in Radar Picket stations when Bogies are reported within 20 miles.

(j) Commence firing at enemy planes when the advanced range is 10000 yards.

(h) Keep the target on the beam at all times, if possible.

8. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of Ship's Company aboard the WILEY on 5 May 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

H. K. McGOWAN.

SECRET

COPY

8 May 1945

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. Mc GOWAN, USNR.
To: Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on HAGGARD (DD-555)

1. Time of Attack: 1657I/29 April 1945.

2. Place of Attack: In close screen of TG 58.4 and in position Latitude 27-01 N., Longitude 129-40 E., at time of attack.

3. Results of Attack: Ship severely damaged. Personnel casualties: 52.

4. Time of Attack: Coordinated suicide attack by two (2) ZEKES, one hit ship, one near miss.

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACK

5. At 1655 two ZEKE'S (Model 52) were sighted visually at a range of about four (4) miles, altitude 600-800 feet, on a relative bearing of 170 degrees from the HAGGARD. They were flying in a column and about 20 feet apart. They passed along the starboard side of the ship in a 10° - 15° glide at very high speed. The ship was making 23 knots when the planes were sighted. When at a distance of 1500 yards from the ship on the starboard side, at an altitude of fifty feet, the leading ZEKE made a 90 degree turn and came in about 10-15 feet, above the water. The plane struck amidships (Frame #1), just below the water line and immediately below the No. 3 40mm mount on the starboard side. A violent explosion resulted and fire broke out on the ship, but the escaping steam extinguished it. The ship was severely damaged. Three engineering spaces were completely flooded and open to the sea. The suicide plane strafed during its approach. The HAGGARD opened fire on it at range of 2500 yards, bearing 145° relative, but no visible evidence of damage to the plane was observed.

6. After the first ZEKE turned in toward the ship, the second ZEKE continued travelling forward on the starboard side for a few hundred yards, and then banked to the right and reversed its course. Visability was observed by the black smoke coming from the stricken ship. The ZEKE was now sighted bearing 160° relative, at a distance of 1500 yards. It

crossed astern of the HAGGARD at a distance of 300-400 yards, then flew up the port side of the ship at about 75 feet (stack) altitude. When approximately opposite No. 4 gun, it banked to the right and dove on the ship. The plane missed and landed in the water with a violent explosion, about 30 feet off the port bow. The ship was dead in the water at this time. This plane did not strafe. It was smoking slightly while flying near the ship and may have been hit by 20 MM during its final run.

7. Casualties:

KIA: 4
WIA: 40
MIA: 8

8. The foregoing information was obtained during an interview with Commanding Officer and other officers aboard the HAGGARD on 1 May 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

[redacted]

8 May 1945.

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOVAN, USNR.
To: Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on DALY (DD-519)

1. Time of Attack: 1737/28 April 1945.

2. Place of Attack: In Radar Picket Station #2.

3. Results: Ship considerably damaged. Personnel casualties: 19 (KIA: 3, WIA: 16).

4. Time of Attack: Highly coordinated suicide attack by several VAL's. Near miss by 1 VAL.

5. Description of Attack:

(a) At 1729/28 April, 4 VAL's were sighted off the port beam of the DALY, at a range of approximately eight miles and an altitude of 6000 feet. At this time the DALY was on a course of 045° T., and was about 300-500 yards astern of the TWIGGS (DD-591). The DALY was making 15 knots. The 4 VAL's were moving forward along the port side, with 2 Corsairs in pursuit. The TWIGGS opened fire on the planes. At the same time 6 more VAL's were also sighted by the DALY off the port beam at a distance of about 5 miles. They were travelling in a direction opposite to that of the first four planes and were heading toward the stern of the DALY. The DALY took these six VAL's under fire.

(b) At 1734 the 6 VAL's stacked themselves astern of the DALY, from the port to the starboard quarter, at a distance of 5 miles and an altitude of 300 feet. VAL #1 was seen to splash, after probably being hit earlier by the DALY's AA. Before VAL #1 hit the water, the DALY had shifted to VAL #2, bearing 210° relative, and splashed it at a distance of 2000 yards. Plane #2 disintegrated in the air, after a direct hit. VAL #3, bearing 100° relative made a run on the ship in a shallow glide from a distance of 3 miles. The DALY's AA knocked off its port wing at the roots and the VAL splashed 200 yards off the starboard beam.

(c) At 1737 VAL #4, bearing 145° relative, dove on the ship from an altitude of about 2000 feet. It was a steep dive (50°-60°). The DALY opened fire at 1500 yards, when the plane was at an altitude of 1500 feet. It burst into flames, but continued its run, passed over the ship off the port beam. The bomb exploded after the plane hit the water and the bursting shrapnel caused numerour small holes in the ships hull and

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on DALY (DD-519)

destroyed or damaged its cables, aerials and other equipment.

(d) At 1739, VAL #5 made a run on the DALY from astern, but was splashed 160 yards off the port quarter. It dropped a bomb before it hit the water. VAL #6 was shot down by CAP at about 1739 while making a run on the ship from a bearing of 125° relative. It splashed about 1000 yards off the port beam.

(e) The TWIGGS was hit by another suicide VAL abour 2-3 minutes after the DALY was damaged. At this time the TWIGGS was on the DALY's starboard quarter. The VAL, pursued by a Corsair, struck the TWIGGS on the starboard side above the waterline, just forward of the bridge, near the forward 40mm guns. The DALY reported that the TWIGGS casualties were: KIA: 4, WIA: 3.

6. Special Comments and Recommendations.

(a) All the planes which attacked the DALY were painted black. They had "meatballs" but no squadron markings.

(b) The Commanding Officer recommendad that the torpedo tubes be removed from Radar Picket destroyers and that 40 MM guns be installed in their place. He also advised that firing be continued to the last second against attacking enemy planes, since they may be splashed or may turn away before striking the ship.

7. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the DALY on 30 April 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

[redacted]

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOWAN, USNR.
To : Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on LITTLE (DD-803).

1. Time of Attack: 1915/4 May 1945.

2. Place of Attack: In Radar Picket Station #10.

3. Type of Attack: Highly coordinated suicide attack by VAL's and Baka's. Ship hit by 1 VAL and 1 BAKA.

4. Results: Ship sunk. Casualties: Number unknown at time of interrogation.

5. Description of Attack:

(a) At 1815, while the LITTLE was on course 160° T., 6 VAL's were sighted off the starboard bow at a range of 5 miles, altitude 1500 feet, bearing 245° T. These planes were flying in a line abreast formation, slightly staggered. They were closing the LITTLE, but not at high speed. The LITTLE thought they were friendly planes which had been vectored out a short time before to intercept an approaching raid. The LITTLE, therefore, did not open fire immediately.

(b) VAL #1, the end plane on the right side of the formation, turned to its left, out in front of the other planes and dove (19°15' angle) on the AARON WARD (DM-34), which was about 4 miles astern of the LITTLE. It struck the WARD and exploded. The LITTLE did not fire on VAL #1. VAL #2 also dove (10°15' angle) on the WARD from the same direction as the first and was apparently hit by AA during its run, for it started to smoke. The LITTLE fired on the plane, and it crashed on the WARD almost amidships. A matter of seconds separated these two crashes on the WARD. VAL #3 also dove on the WARD from a slightly different bearing. The LITTLE shot down this plane off its starboard quarter.

(c) Suddenly VAL #4 started a steep dive (45°50') on the LITTLE from the port quarter, at a distance of 5000 yards and an altitude of 1000 feet. It was hit by AA during its run and "pieces were torn off its wings." It crashed the LITTLE abaft of No. 2 stack. A large gasoline fire broke out, but it is believed that no bomb exploded. No bomb was seen on the plane during its approach.

(d) About 45 seconds after VAL #4 struck the LITTLE, a ZEKE crashed into the ship. It was first spotted at a range of 1000 yards off the starboard beam flying at mast height. It made its run in a dive and hit the ship at deck level, in the area of the after torpedo tubes and No. 43 gun (starboard after 40MM). The ZEKE straffed during its approach. There was no immediate detonation after the plane hit, but about 10 seconds later a terrific explosion occurred.

The torpedoes apparently were detonated and/or perhaps the plane was carrying a delayed action bomb. The back of the ship was broken by this explosion.

(e) The LITTLE sank about 25 minutes after the first VAL hit it. It was then about 1950. Before it went down the LITTLE fired on another enemy plane which made a run on another small craft in the distance. The LCS-83 shot down an unidentified enemy plane as the LITTLE's survivors entered the water, and shortly thereafter it splashed VAL #5 between the LCS and the LITTLE's life rafts. The LCS was about 300-400 yards from the rafts at this time. The LCS 195 blew up with its rockets after a suicide hit about 8 miles to the north of the LITTLE's survivors. VAL #6 crashed into the AARON WARD while the LITTLE's survivors were in the water. Both the LITTLE and the WARD were hit by all five planes within five minutes. CAP shot down 2 more enemy planes after the LITTLE sank. The survivors were in the water about 1½ hours and were finally picked up by LCS's and other ships and craft.

6. Casualties:

At the time of this interrogation (4 May 1945) officers and men had been accounted for and were uninjured. The total complement of the ship was 353. In addition to the 143 accounted for, many others were probably picked up by other ships and craft.

7. Special Comments and Observations:

(a) Some of the ship's officers said that they "made their big mistake" when they did not fire at the group of 6 VAL's as soon as they were first sighted off the starboard bow. They thought that the VAL's were the CAP planes (Hellcats) returning to the area, after missing the enemy raid which they had been sent out to intercept.

(b) Visibility was about 4 miles at the time of the attack. The sun was 10o15' above the horizon.

(c) The enemy planes came in from the southwest, and were tracked on the LITTLE's radar all during their approach.

8. The foregoing information was obtained on 4 May 1945 from various ships officers of the LITTLE, who were aboard the NATRONA APA 214 in the KERAMA RETTO anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

7 May 1945

[redacted]

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOWAN, USNR.
To : Intelligence Officer.

Subject: BAKA Bomb Attack on U.S.S. SHEA (DM-30)-Report of.

1. Interrogation of the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. SHEA (DM-30), and other members of ship's company on 6 May 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage, revealed the following facts regarding the subject attack.

2. At 0857 ~~ton~~ 4 May 1945, the SHEA was patrolling in an area bearing 335° T., distant 20 miles from Point BOLO. A heavy pall of smoke drifting over from the beaches and transport area at OKINAWA, had covered the SHEA's patrol area since early morning and reduced visibility considerably. "Bogies," coming from the north, northeast and northwest, were reported in the area for some time prior to the BAKA bomb attack and CAP shot down several of them within visual range of the SHEA.

3. Approximately 3-5 minutes before the BAKA Bomb attack, a BETTY was shot down by CAP about 5-6 miles off the SHEA's starboard bow.

4. Suddenly at 0857, the BAKA Bomb was sighted about 500 yards off the starboard beam, at an altitude of approximately 500 feet. At that moment it was [illegible] in level flight and was closing the ship on a heading of approximately 315°-330° relative. The BAKA Bomb immediately made a 45o turn to its left and came in on the starboard beam in a shallow glide (15°-20°). The BAKA Bomb had appeared out of the smoke haze without any prior warning. This smoke rose to an altitude of 500-600 feet. At the time the SHEA was in a full turn, with full rudder, traveling at 30 knots.

5. The BAKA Bomb struck the ship about 50 feet above the water, on the starboard side of the superstructure deck, in the after part of the sonar room. About 3-5 seconds elapsed between the time of the first visual sighting of the bomb and the time it struck the ship. The plywood wings were sheared off and the rest of the bomb passed diagonally through the ship. It exploded at water level, about 10-25 feet from the ship on the port side, under the forward 20MM guns. The hull was penetrated in several places by the flying shrapnel and extensive flooding resulted.

130

C O P Y

[redacted]

Subject: BAKA Bomb Attack on U.S.S. SHEA (DM-30) - Report of.

6. Nobody actually saw the BAKA Bomb launched. The imprint of its wings was clearly discernable on the bulkhead, as the bomb tore through. Its wing-span measured about 15-16 feet. One man said, "It sounded like an out-board motor." Another stated, "It looked like a flying torpedo." Twin fins and rudders were observed. The nose appeared, unusually big for the size of the wing," and the nose also, "looked like the nose of a blimp." It was round and blunt. The wings were short. No propellor was seen. The bomb travelled at tremendous speed. The color of the BAKA Bomb blended with the haze and smoke ("Tannish grey").

7. Casualties:

KIA - 26
WIA - 50 (10-20 expected to die)
MIA - NONE

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

AMPHIBIOUS GROUP SEVEN

SECRET

8 May 1945.

From: Lieut. Harold X. McGowan, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Baka Bomb and Suicide Plane Attack on U.S.S. GAYETY (AM 239).

1. Time of Attack: Ø145I - Ø147I/4 May 1945.

2. Place: U.S.S. GAYETY bearing 136°T., distant 16 miles from TOKI SHIMA at time of attack.

3. Results: Minor damage to ship. Casualties: 3 men slightly wounded.

Description of Attack.

4. Ø445.I - Suicide Attack by VAL on U.S.S. HOPKINS (DMS 13).

At the commencement of this attack the GAYETY was patrolling on a base course of 330°T., about 800 yards directly astern of the HOPKINS (DMS 13). At Ø445 a VAL was sighted off the GAYETY's starboard quarter, at a distance of 5000-6000 yards and an altitude of 3000-4000 feet. It approached in a steep dive (45°-50°) and at high speed, until it reached a position on the starboard beam of the HOPKINS. It then did a tight wing-over in an effort to crash the HOPKINS, but passed between its second and third stacks and struck the water, about 25 yards off the port beam. It hit some piping and aerial on one of the stacks, but did no serious damage. No explosion occurred when the plane hit the water.

5. Ø450.I - Suicide Attack by VAL on U.S.S. GAYETY (AM239).

Five minutes after the first attack a second VAL was sighted off the GAYETY's port bow, at a distance of 5000-6000 yards and an altitude of 3000-4000 feet. At this time the HOPKINS was on the starboard beam of the GAYETY. The plane approached on the port side of the GAYETY, circled astern and made its final run in a steep dive from the starboard quarter. It was definitely hit by 20 MM and 40 MM AA.from the GAYETY, but showed no visible evidence of damage. It did a tight wing-over similar to the first VAL's, missed the GAYETY's mast by a few feet and splashed in the water on the port quarter, about 25-50 yards from the ship. No explosion took place.

6. Ø547I - Baka Bomb Attack on U.S.S. GAYETY (AM239).

About one hour after the second attack, a BETTY was sighted off the GAYETY's port side, heading in the direction of the KERAMA RETTO on a course of 130°T. The BETTY's course was approximately parallel to and opposite that of the GAYETY. When first sighted, it was about 8000-9000 yards distant from the GAYETY and was flying at an altitude of 8000-9000 feet and a speed of 150 knots. Two HELLCATS intercepted the BETTY when it reached a position off the GAYETY's port quarter between KUME and TOMACKI SHIMA. A wing was shot off the BETTY and it reversed its course and headed for the GAYETY.

7. At that point a long thin vertical column of black smoke was observed under and near the BETTY. It "went straight down as if in a dive" and reached a length of 3000-4000 feet, then stopped abruptly about 2000 feet above the water. At first it was thought that the streamer of smoke was from the BETTY or another aircraft shot down by CAP, but it is now believed to have emanated from the BAKA BOMB at the time it was launched by the BETTY. The BETTY was splashed in the area by CAP, but the action took place at a distance and the swift movements of the BETTY were not followed closely after the long thin column of black smoke was seen, because shortly thereafter the Baka Bomb was also sighted. While CAP was attacking the first BETTY, one man said he saw another BETTY East of TOKI SHIMA at an altitude of 500 feet. This BETTY was on as Easterly course and disappeared.

8. The Baka Bomb was sighted shortly after the long thin trail of black smoke was observed. It was first observed at a distance of about 6000-7000 yards astern of the GAYETY and at an altitude of 500 feet. The Baka banked to its right and headed for 5 YMS's which were bunched together off the GAYETY's port quarter at a distance of 2000-3000 yards. The Baka Bomb was "hedgehopping" and it "skimmed down" in a shallow glide to a point just above the tops of the masts (58 ft. high) of the YMS's. It just cleared the masts and then soared to an altitude of about 150-200 feet. The GAYETY opened fire at a range of 3000 yards when the Baka Bomb was over the YMS's. Some of the personnel om the YMS's claimed that the Baka Bomb strafed them, but this probably was AA fire from the GAYETY.

9. The Baka Bomb started its run on the GAYETY at a distance of 2000-3000 yards and at an altitude of 150-200 feet. It came in from the port quarter in a shallow glide and on a straight sourse. AA (especially 40 MM) from the GAYETY was "hitting him right in the face all the way in", and the nose section sprang off "like the cowling of an engime cut in two." The Baka Bomb nosed over into the water about 25-50 yards off the GAYETY's port quarter. The GAYETY feels that it was definitely shot dow by 40 MM fire. Pieces of the Baka Bomb and portions of the Japanese pilot's body splashed on the bulkhead on the side of the boat deck on the fantail, and the debris injured 3 men and knocked out the 40 MM gun on the starboard side of the boat deck. The Bomb did not explode. Eighty- five (85) rounds of 40 MM were fired at the Baka Bomb by the GAYETY.

10. Descriptive Details.

Twin fins and rudders were observed. Also square wing tips and "square wings like a MUSTANG's". Had no landing gear. Some men on the fantail believe they saw a propeller on the Baka Bomb. It had a blunt radial nose. At first its size was thought to be similar to that of an ordinary plane. Its speed was at least twice as great as that of the VAL's which attacked the GAYETY, and was estimated at 350-400 knots.

Subject: Baka Bomb and Suicide Plane attack on U.S.S. GAYETY (AM 239).

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11. Other Comments.

(a) Some officers expressed the opinion that the Japanese have a radio station on TONACHI which reported the presence of the GAYETY and other ships in the area, on the morning of the attack.

(b) Another officer believed that a BETTY may have been directing the 2 suicide attacks by the VAL's. He stated that at Ø645I when the attacks began, a BETTY was observed flying along slowly at a rather high altitude and at a range of about 5 miles. Immediately thereafter the VAL's attacked the GAYETY and the HOPKINS The BETTY disappeared.

12. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other officers aboard the GAYETY on 6 May 1945. to the KERAMA RETTO anchorage.

Harold X. Mc Gowan.

COPY

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MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGowan, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks on HOBSON (DMS-26) and PRINGLE (DD-477)

1. Time of Attack: 0900 to 1000, 16 April 1945.

2. Place: In Radar Picket Station Number 14 (Bearing 326°T, distance 77 miles from Point BOLO).

3. Time of Attack: Coordinated suicide attack by several Vals. 11struck PRINGLE. Bomb and engine from another struck HOBSON after being splashed nearby.

4. Results: PRINGLE sunk: HOBSON severely damaged. HOBSON casualties; 10 (KIA 4 - WIA 6 (2 very seriously)). PRINGLE casualties unknown. Only HOBSON personnel interrogated.

5. Description of Attack:

(a) 0920 - PRINGLE sunk by Suicide VAL-

(1) The HOBSON and the PRINGLE were patrolling at a speed of about 10 knots on an easterly course at this time. The PRINGLE was 800 to 1000 yards off the HOBSON's starboard beam. A VAL came in on the PRINGLE's starboard quarter from a distance of 8000 yards, an altitude of 2000 to 3000 feet and in faily level flight. The HOBSON opened fire, shooting over the PRINGLE at the approaching plane. It closed to a range of 3000 yards and then turned left toward the stern of the PRINGLE. Upon reaching a position about 3000 yards astern of the PRINGLE, it reversed its course and dove on the ship from an altitude of 500 to 700 feet(dive angle about 10°), It struck the PRINGLE amidships. A tremendous explosion followed and flames engulfed the PRINGLE. The plane was carrying a bomb and the PRINGLE's torpedoes also probably exploded. The ship's back was broken and she sank within 6 minutes after being hit.

(2) Numerous enemy planes were now within visual range of the HOBSON. Some would approach to a range of 8000 to 9000 yards, the HOBSON would open fire and they would then retire and continue to orbit at a distance of 12000 yards.

(b) 0922 - HOBSON Hit by Suicide VAL

(1) 3 VALs were sighted on the starboard side, at a range of 11000 yards, stepped up to an altitude of about 500 feet and circling in a clockwise

COPY

AMPHIBIOUS GROUP SEVEN

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks on HOBSON (DMS-26) and PRINGLE (DD-477)

direction. Another VAL was spotted off the port beam, at a range of 8000 yards and and an altitude of 500 feet. One of the group of 3 VALS on the starboard side maneuvered to a position about 5000 yards off the starboard quarter. It then made a run on the HOBSON in a shallow glide from an altitude of 530 feet. the ship opened fire at 2500 yards. A 5-inch projectile burst above the VAL's tail plane and the plane struck the water about 50 yards off the starboard beam. The bomb and engine skipped over the water into the ship. The bomb struck the main deck on the starboard side and exploded in the forward engine room, causing serious damage to the machinery. The weight of the bomb was believed to be 250 pounds. The VAL's engine struck the deck house aft of Number 2 stack and damaged one of the boilers. One of the wings went flying over the bridge.

6. Special Comments and Observations:

(a) Several attacks by other VALs, a ZEKE and a BETTY proceeded and followed the suicide crashes on the PRINGLE and HOBSON.

(b) The BETTY was believed to be directing the attacks by the VALs.

(c) The PRINGLE splashed a VAL at 0915 (before the suicide attacks)and the HOBSON destroyed another VAL at 0945 and a ZEKE at 1000 (both after being hit by the suicide plane's bomb and engine).

(d) Very effective damage control was credited with keeping the HOBSON operational after being hit. Its radar and all of its guns were back in operation shortly after the ship was struck by the bomb and plane engine.

(e) No CAP was visible in the area at the time of the attacks. It had departed at 0730.

(f) The suicide planes clearly picked the stronger target to attack first. The PRINGLE was a 2100-ton destroyer with five 5-inch guns and about five 40MM. The HOBSOM (a DMS) is 1430 tons, with three 5-inch guns and two 40MM.

(g) Some of the ship's officers suggested that CVE's be placed in the radar picket stations.

(h) The HOBSON had been in Condition 1-Easy for 72 hours continuously at the time of the attack, and had been on Condition 1 since 0500 on 4 May (with the exception of a half hour for breakfast, from 0800 to 0830 during which time Condition 1-Easy was set).

(i) The engine which struck the HOBSON was the same type as that found on the BOWERS (DE 637). It was very old but well-constructed.

(j) The performance of the HOBSON's radar SG 3 - SC 1 and Mark 17) was praised by the ship's officers.

7. The foregoing information was attained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the HOBSON on 29 April 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN

136
137

[redacted] 9 May 1945.

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGowan, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attacks on MARYLAND (BB 46) and WADSWORTH (DD 516).

1. Time of Attacks: (1) 1835, 7 April 1945. (2) 1825, 12 April 1945. (3) 2014, 28 April 1945.

2. Place: (1) Probably Fire Support Retirement Area West of OKINAWA, (2) Radar Picket Station Number 10, (3) Radar Picket Station Number 12.

3. Type of Attacks: (1) Suicide attack by OSCAR, (2) Coordinated suicide attack by 3 JUDYs at night, (3) Torpedo and suicide attack by 1 KATE at night (also attacked later by several planes).

4. Results: (1) MARYLAND considerably damaged. Number of personnel casualties unknown, (2) WADSWORTH suffered superficial damage. No personnel casualties, (3) Only WADSWORTH personnel interrogated.

5. Description of Attacks:

(a) 1835, 7 April 1945 - Suicide Attack by OSCAR, as MARYLAND is Fire Support Retirement Area West of OKINAWA.

(1) The OSCAR suddenly appeared out of the clouds without having been picked up by radar during its approach. It came in on the starboard bow of the WADSWORTH and was first spotted visually at a distance of 3000 yards and an altitude of 1800 feet. It was travelling at 160 knots and headed for the WADSWORTH and 8 to 12 other DDs nearby. When they opened fire, it turned toward the MARYLAND, which was about 600 yards off the WADSWORTH's port bow. The MARYLAND was firing least. The OSCAR crashed on Number 4 turret on the MARYLAND and a large fire resulted. It was said that a second plane at a greater distance was acting as a decoy. No further details were available.

(b) 1825, 22 April 1945 - Suicide Attack on WADSWORTH in Radar Picket Station Number 10 by 3 JUDYs.

(1) This was an evening twilight attack. A group of 2 to 3 planes was picked up by radar at a range of 23 miles, altitude 4000 feet, speed 140 knots. They were closing the WADSWORTH. They were then sighted off the port beam at a distance of 7 miles, altitude 2000 to 4000 feet, approaching in a very shallow glide. They were 3

JUDYs and were coming in out of the sun. The WADSWORTH opened fire at 10,000 yards when they were at an altitude of 2000 feet. No CAP was in the area at this time. The WADSWORTH was alone, except for small support craft.

(b) The 3 JUDYs were flying in a loose formation, with 2 close together and the third plane off to their right. JUDY #1 was splashed at a distance of 6000 yards by 5-inch fire. JUDY #2 (plane furthest to right of formation) approached from the port quarter. It was hit by AA. It went out across the port quarter and came over the ship, just aft of No. 2 stack, below stack level. The pilot apparently saw that he was over shooting his target and executed a wing-over, but the plane splashed in the water on the starboard side, about 15 feet from No. 2 turret. A large explosion resulted and six small holes were later found in the ship's hull. JUDY #2 strafed during its approach. JUDY #3 crossed in front of the ship and disappeared in the direction of the Transport Area toward the east.

(c) 2014, 28 April 1945 - Torpedo and Suicide Attack by 1 KATE.

(1) After first circling and strafing the ship several times, a KATE made a torpedo run on the WADSWORTH from a distance of 1000 yards and an altitude of 400 to 500 feet. It came in on the port bow in a shallow glide and torpedo missed its mark and sank. It did not explode. The Japanese pilot appeared to be extremely capable and, after dropping the torpedo, evaded the WADSWORTH's AA fire by dipping and "JINKING". He continued on in about 50 feet over the water and struck the forward 40 MM mount on the port side, with his left wing. The plane continued aft along the port side, clipped the life raft on the side of the bridge and crashed into the motor whaleboat, about 15 to 20 feet aft of the bridge, Both plane and whaleboat crashed in the water. No explosion occurred.

(2) At 2025 the WADSWORTH splashed another single engine plane about 20 feet off the port bow, and at 2134 also shot down a third single engine plane about 300 to 400 yards distant on the starboard side.

6. Special Comments and Recommendations:

(a) Ships in Radar Picket Stations should steam at night at a speed of 10 to 12 knots, with as little wake as possible and with very frequent course changes.

(b) When an enemy plane approaches within 5000 to 6000 yards, increase speed to 25 to 28 knots and maneuver radically.

(c) Open fire as early as possible and continue firing to the last second.

(d) Keep both motor whaleboats rigged out for sea. It was felt that this circumstance prevented the KATE from swinging sharply to its left and diving into the ship during its final run. When rigged for sea, the boats are also less of a fire hazard and are in a constant condition of readiness for any emergencies.

(e) Twilight and night CAP for Radar Pickets are desireable.

(f) The officers aboard the WADSWORTH felt sure that Jap planes had been landing at KUME. On several occasions a large amount of "window" could suddenly be observed over the island, as if shot from a mortar. Bogies would enter the "window", but would not emerge from it, indicating that they had probably landed on KUME.

7. The foregoing information was obtained from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the WADSWORTH on 29 April 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. MCGOWAN.

C O P Y

I/pt

A8

0090

[redacted]

From: Commander Task Group 51.15 (Commander Amphibious Group SEVEN)
To : Commander Task Force 51 (Commander Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet).

Subject: Intelligence Report Regarding Suicide Plane Attack on U.S.S. TERROR (CM 5) in KERAMA RETTO Anchorage, 1 May 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Two (2) copies of subject report.

1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded herewith for information.

THOMAS M. HAMILTON
By Direction.

cc:
Com5thFleet (with enclosure)
CinCPOA (JicPoa) (with enclosure)

COPY I/sh

12 May 1945

S-E-C-R-E-T

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Harold X. McGOWAN, USNR.
To : The Intelligence Officer.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on TERROR (CH 5).

1. Time of Attack: 0358, 1 May 1945.

2. Place: In Berth K-68 in KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

3. Type of Attack: Suicide attack by single engine plane at night. Enemy plane apparently induced ship to open fire and reveal its location by showing white running light. Final run made at high speed and 30 to 40 feet over the water.

4. Results: Ship severely damaged. Casualties: 167 (KIA 42 - WIA 27 - MIA 98).

5. Description of Attack:

(a) At the time of the attack the TERROR was heading approximately 140° True in Berth K68. The MT. MCKINLEY was on her port beam, heading 150° True in Berth K-37, about 1100 yards distant. The center of K-37 bears 057° True from the center of K-68.

(b) At 0354 the MT. MCKINLEY went to General Quarters. At 0355 a steady white light was sighted off the TERROR's port quarter (relative bearing of 200° to 120°), at a distance of 800 to 1000 yards and an altitude of 800 feet. The light was observed to be heading astern of the TERROR in a shallow dive and was identified as being on a plane. The light went out as the plane passes astern of the ship. One man on the TERROR said that he saw a green blinking light on the plane's port wing.

(c) The Number 46 gun (port 40 mm after quad mount) fired about ten (10 rounds at the light as soon as it was sighted. One man on the MT.MCKINLEY reported that the TERROR fired across her (MT.MCKINLEY's) stern from starboard to port for about 20 seconds, and then ceased fire for about ten (10) seconds. At 0356 the MT.MCKINLEY sent out the whistle signal to make smoke. The TERROR was the first ship to open fire. A YMS about 1000 yards off the TERROR's starboard quarter fired a little later. The reason the TERROR stopped firing was because the Commanding Officer heard a report of "Flash White" in the Pilot House and gave the order to cease firing. At the time of this interview, he was unable to recollect the identity of the originator of this report.

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on TERROR (CM-5)

(d) About 5 to 30 seconds after the TERROR ceased firing on its port side a Jap plane was sighted about 500 yards off the starboard quarter(bearing 120° to 150° relative). It was travelling very fast, on a straight course and about 30 to 40 feet over the water. It approached on a slight rise. The TERROR fired 2 or 3 bursts from the starboard quad 40 mm mount. When slightly abaft of the starboard beam (bearing 090° to 100° relative) and a few feet from the ship, the plane flipped its wings to the left and crashed into the ship.

(e) It hit aft of the bridge, almost amidships, between the Number 1 motor launch and the deck. The plane apparently was carrying two bombs. One thermite bomb landed in the wardroom and burned there for an hour. The other exploded on the main deck, after passing through two decks above. When the plane banked just before it struck the ship, one man said he saw "something sticking out on the right wing". This may have been a bomb. The ship was severely damaged by the explosion and by the fires which followed.

(f) The plane was not definitely identified. It was described by one man as a "single-engine plane, with a low wing, streamlined body, no fixed landing gear and not too great a wing spread". He thought at first that it was a TONY. Another man said that the plane had an "extra long fuselage, rounded, like our TBY". A third man said "It was an elongated plane, with a small, thin fuselage". All agreed that it was a single-engine plane. The first report stating that a twin-engine plane had attacked the TERROR was the result of erroneously identifying the engine from the TERROR's motor launch as an additional plane engine.

6. Radar Plot of Suicide Plane:

At about 0330 a bogey was picked up approximately 35 miles to the southwest of KERAMA RETTO. The bogey slowed on a course of 040° True and it appeared that it would clear the KERAMA RETTO area by 10 miles. When the bogey was bearing 160° True, distant 11 miles from the MT.MCKINLEY, CTG 51.15 set Condition "Flash Red", Control GREEN". The bogey then apparently turned northeast and closed the KERAMA RETTO Area. Night CAP was closing the bogey, since two merged plots were obtained on the radar screen. The bogey was last reported about 9 miles to the southeast at 0355: Warning net reports indicated a bogey to the east of TOKASHIKI SHIMA. After the attack at 0358, one bogey retired, indicating that two bogies approached the KERAMA RETTO Area. The suicide plane apparently approached from the east and flew over TOKASHIKI into the Transport Area.

7. Other Observations:

At 0155 the TERROR sighted a plane closing about 2200 yards off the port quarter showing standard red (port wing) and green (starboard wing) running lights. The lights went out as the plane passed overhead. At 0800 another plane was seen about one mile off the port quarter, opening toward the northern end of the anchorage and showing the same standard red and green running lights. At 0801, two planes were

[redacted]

Subject: Suicide Plane Attack on TERROR (CM-5)

sighted, showing red and green wing lights and one white tail light, at a distance of 1000 yards, altitude 1500 feet, passing across the TERROR's fantail on a course of 210° True. All of the sightings were reported to CTG 51.15 by the TERROR. These sightings were eventually evaluated as friendly night fighters by CTG 51-15 and CTF 51 was requested to keep night fighters out of the KERAMA RETTO Area.

8. The foregoing information was obtained from the specific sources indicated in this report and from the Commanding Officer and other members of ship's company aboard the TERROR on 3 May 1945 in the KERAMA RETTO Anchorage.

HAROLD X. McGOWAN.

DD552/A16-3/A9-1
(1)/jm
Serial 003

U.S.S. EVANS (DD552)
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

~~SECRET~~

21 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Task Force Fifty-One (51) (Commander Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Methods Used Against Jap Air Attack on 11 May 1945.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Despatch 141100 of May 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Copy of EVANS Serial 037 of 20 May 1945, Special Report to ComDesPac.

1. Each air attack presents its own peculiar problems. In this one, there were a total of about 50 planes attacking HADLEY and EVANS over a period of an hour and a half. It was our good fortune that during most of the action the planes came in singly, or in a group from one bearing at a time. We were thus enabled to concentrate guns on one attack, shoot it down, and shift immediately to the next attack. In the final stages when planes were diving from three directions simultaneously, one out of the sun, we could only continue to shoot and maneuver at maximum speed and hope for the best.

2. HADLEY and EVANS attempted to remain in close support of each other, and succeeded several times in rendering mutual assistance. The frequency and varied direction of attacks was such that some separation was inevitable as we maneuvered at high speed and turned radically to bring all guns to bear.

3. It is felt that the following points should be stressed in this type of action:

(a) Lookouts: Use all available bridge and control personnel and insist on a strict sector watch, especially when a plane is being flamed elsewhere.
(b) SC Radar: Invaluable for early warning on low flying bogies.
(c) When under observation, change course frequently ten, twenty or thirty degrees.
(d) When attack begins, or before if possible, increase speed to maximum.
(e) Maneuver to bring maximum number of guns to bear on each attack. Then when possible, change direction of turn at the last moment.
(f) Use rapid continuous fire, with ammunition ratio four VT to one AA Common.

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ENCLOSURE (A)

DD552/A16-3/A9-1
(1)/jim
Serial 003

U.S.S. EVANS (DD552)
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

~~SECRET~~

21 May 1945

Subject: Methods Used Against Jap Air Attack on 11 May 1945.

(g) Although against doctrine, it was found necessary in many cases to shift fire from one target flamed to the next attack, keeping guns in full automatic and continuing to shoot, while slowing director.

(h) Use of Mark 53 ammunition: Excellent performance in every way, especially in that no prematures were observed on very low flying bogies.

(i) Use of push buttons and synchro motor on computer for rapidly changing target angle. This is described in Enclosure (A).

/s/
R. J. ARCHER.

cc:
with enclosure (A) to ComDesPac.

DD552/S71
Serial 037

U.S.S. EVANS (DD552)
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

20 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander Destroyers, Pacific Fleet.

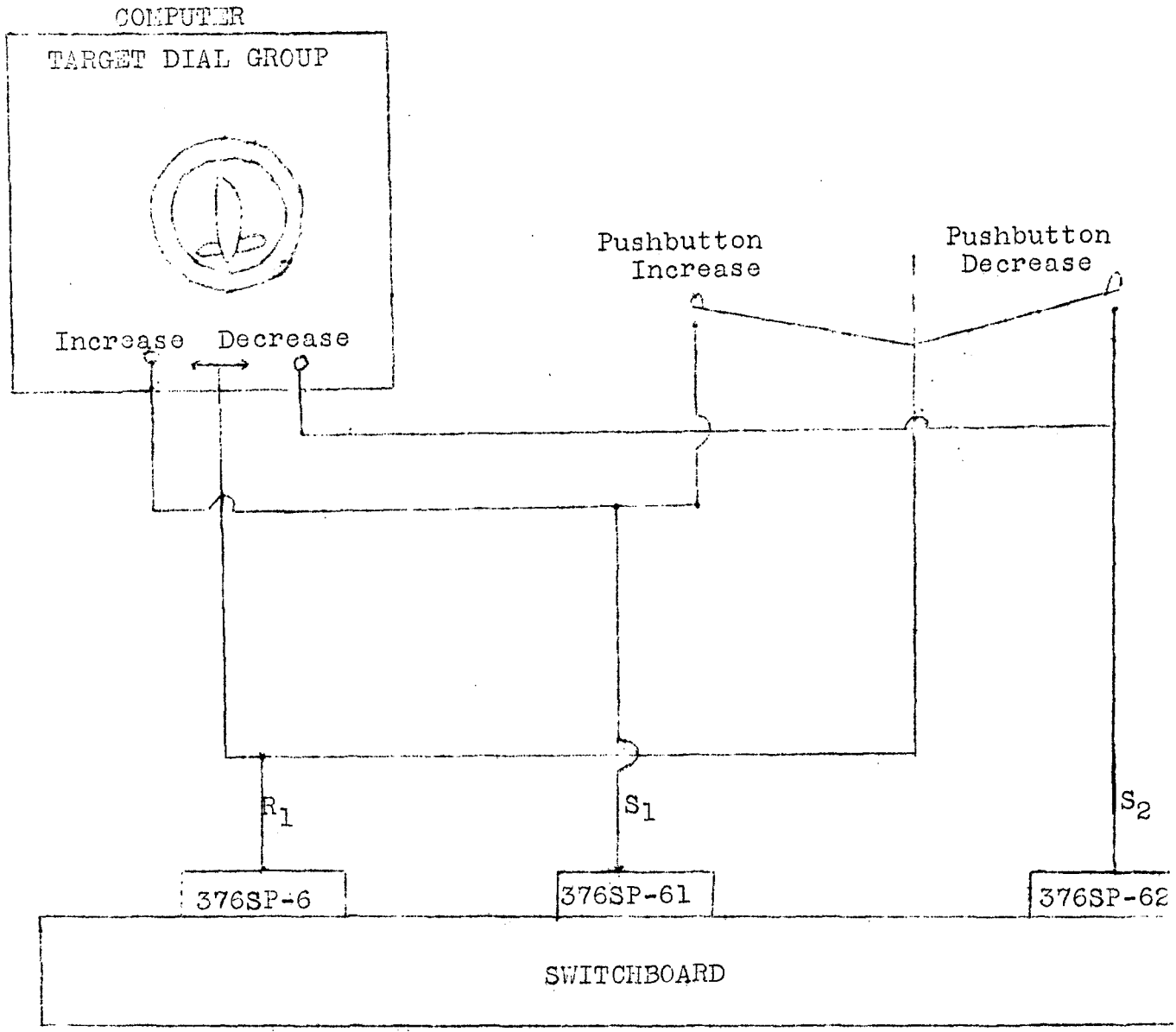
Subject: Synchro Motor for Rapidly Changing Target Angle, Report on as Directed Orally This Date, by Commander Destroyers, Pacific Fleet.

1. The subject target angle device was found to be most satisfactory in recent heavy air attacks experienced by this ship. Enemy aircraft were coming in directly in quick succession from different directions. As one plane or group of planes was shot down, it was necessary to slow the director to the next attack, never having time to track and obtain a solution. The idea for this device was brought to the EVANS by an officer returning from Destroyers Pacific Fleet Gunnery School.

2. Fire control setup: Guns in complete automatic at all times, using director pointer key, rapid continuous fire, Computer train and elevation in full automatic, with time motor running continuously. Target angle was kept constantly on zero by means of a special synchro motor hookup to rapidly change target angle (see attached sketch). Range rate at the computer was in manual and ranges kept matched at all times.

3. A special two push button switch was taken from the old target angle repeater indicator formerly located at the Control Officer's hatch in Mk. 37 director. This switch was installed in a box 10"x2½"x2½" and mounted under range knob on Mk. I computer.

R. J. ARCHER.



By means of push buttons the S1 lead was shorted through the switchboard to the R1 lead, giving motor action in one direction (increasing target angle). By shorting the S2 lead through the switchboard to the R1 lead, motor action was obtained in the opposite direction (decreasing target angle).

File No. DM26/A1[redacted]3/ajs
Serial: 004

U. S. S. HARRY F. BAUER (DM 26)

[redacted]

C/O Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
13 May 1945

[redacted]

From: The Commanding Officer (OTC Radar Picket Station No. 5).
To: The Commander Amphibious Force, U.S. PACIFIC FLEET.

Subject: Observations made during air attack 11 May 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Track Chart of attack.

1. Between 0801 and 0830(I), 11 May 1945, this station was attacked by an estimated seven enemy aircraft, all of which were destroyed. Two of these, a bomber (BETTY or DINAH) and a fighter (ZEKE or TOJO) were shot down by the CAP, the remainder by antiaircraft. LCS 88 was hit by a bomb from one of the planes (identified as a KATE) at about 0806, when it splashed close aboard her, destroying her fantail and jamming rudder left full, blowing the after 40 mm. mount off the ship; killing her commanding officer and six enlisted men, and wounding two officers and five men. One man (the after starboard lookout on this ship) was shot through the left foot with a bullet estimated to be a caliber .45. No other casualties were reported. Inasmuch as this was a coordinated attack involving two slightly successful suicide attempts on the part of the enemy, this report is submitted in advance to expedite the delivery of information which may be of value.

2. Many raids were reported closing from the north at 0740(I), and were detected by this vessel at about 0750 about 30 miles to northward, headed in our general direction. They were reported to U.S.S. DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD779), the FDO of the picket station. At this time the disposition, consisting of four LCS's and one PGM, in a column formation on an easterly course at 8 knots, with the destroyers patrolling about 3,000 yards to northwest in a port quarter echelon formation at speed 15 knots on an easterly course. Course was reversed by a turn 18 and speed increased to 25 knots to close support craft.

3. First attack: At about 18 miles CAP vectored out and merged plot observed in Combat at about 11 miles bearing 355° (T) but no tallyho. Fire control radar was coached on target at 14 miles. Raid split at about ten miles with what turned out to be DINAH going southwest and then south, and ZEKES or KATES

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Serial: 004

U. S. S. HARRY F. BAUER (DM 26)
[redacted]T
C/O Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
[redacted]
13 May 1945

Subject: Observations made during air attack 11 May 1945.

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turning east, losing altitude and then coming in very low from 025. Fire control radar stayed on DINAH with tracking started at 23,000 yards. Plane was sighted visually on port beam at about 12,000 yards and identified as enemy. At 0801 she was taken under fire by this ship which with U.S.S. DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD779) was brought left to north by turn movement about 90°. Although it looked for a short time as if she were preparing to make a run on this group, she remained on a southerly course opening the range. The CAP, vectored out to intercept her, reported splashing her about three minutes after we ceased fire on her at 0803. It is thought that she served as a diversion for the two planes closing from the northeast (two KATES or ZEKES) which came in low over the water at high speed. At 0804, this ship opened on the closer of the attackers (range 9,000 yards, bearing 020), and was followed by all ships in company. Fire of all ships appeared accurate and intense, and the Jap turned slightly left about the time he was set afire (about four thousand yards from us) toward the support craft and splashed harmlessly in the water about twelve hundred yards on our starboard quarter at 0805. The second target was taken under fire at a range of four thousand yards and was soon blazing. Fire was ceased by this vessel because of fouled range at 0806, the plane splashing seconds thereafter about one hundredyards north of LCS 88. Before splashing, she released a bomb which ricocheted on the water to explode on the fantail of that vessel with a heavy explosion and fire, killing her captain and six men and wounding two officers and five men, besides wrecking her rudder and blowing the after 40 mm. mount off the ship. Although these two splashes were awarded to DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD779) and LCS 52 in dispatch on voice radio, any one of the ships firing on them would be justified in claiming them, as the firing of the group was both heavy and accurate. Particularly strong is theclaim of LCS 88, who after the dispatch was sent out, put in a strong bid for the plane that bombed her.

4. The second attack developed about 0821(I), when four planes, visually identified as of fighter type (three ZEKES and one TOJO) were sighted about twelve miles to the northward at about 5,000 feet. A ZEKE and a TOJO started to close this group in a shallow dive and fire was commenced on them at 0822.

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U. S. S. HARRY F. BAUER (DM 26)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
13 May 1945

Subject: Observations made during air attack 11 May 1945.

The first few salvoes splashed the TOJO at about 6,500 yards and fire was shifted to the ZEKE at 0822. Bursts were observed near him, but theammunition performance of the 5" VT, Mark 53, Mod. 0, which had been salvaged from a damaged ship in KERAMA RETTO was particularly poor. Although he was probably hit frequently, he kept coming in. Frequent prematures in the VT were noted. The fire must havebeen too hot for him for a while though, for he changed from a direct approach to a course that would pass ahead of the ship, gaining a little in altitude as he did. We put the rudder right full, as he changed course and when he reached a position ahead of the ship, he had to turn through about 120 degrees of arc in about 1,000 yards. While turning he was taking merciless punishment from the 5" battery and automatic weapons. It is believed that he straffed the ship with a caliber .45 machine gun as one slug was found near the depth charge projectors, another entered the lookout's foot, and a third struck a barrel spring of the after port 40 mm. quad. He was unable to turn short enough though, and splashed about 30 yards off starboard quarter, the stern swinging away from him as he splashed at 0824. On impact with the water, his bomb exploded with some force throwing debris and water about 30 feet in the air.

5. One of the remaining fighters was engaged by the combat air patrol, which shot down one ZEKE. The other ZEKE, however, eluded them and commenced a run on the ship at about 0833 from about 12,000 yards to the north at 0833. He was immediately taken under fire and his undercarriage was burning at about 4,000 yards. He managed to keep closing, however, and at about 1,000 yards started to bank to counter the effect of the full right rudder which was turning the ship very quickly. He was followed in with the guns that would bear, and about 30 yards from the ship his tail surface was blown off by 40 mm. and 20 mm. fire. This lifted his rear up a little and his right wing surface hit the forward port depth charge projector, knocking off the depth charge and arbor onto one of the life line stanchions on the main deck which bent in bouncing it back onto the main deck. The wing tip caught the life line on the superstructure deck snapping it, but at the same time releasing his bomb which richocheted about 200 feet before exploding. The plane crashed harmlessly in the water about 15 yards on the port quarter. The remains of about three feet of his starboard wing and his starboard running

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U. S. S. HARRY F. BAUER (DM 26)
C/O Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
13 May 1945

Subject: Observations made during air attack 11 May 1945.

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light were left on deck. The metal of the wing surface was stamped in several places "ACDH".

6. The ammunition expenditures for this action were as follows:

	5"AAC	5"VT	40mm.	20mm.	.50 cal.	.30 cal.
LCS 52			495	430	770	
LCS 88	Not received.					
LCS 109			555	395	600	
LCS 114			580	220	70	
PGM 20	Not received.					
DH. FOX	Ammo. report not received prior to her relief.					
HF. BAUER	169	230	784	1104	500	750

7. PGM 20 with a doctor aboard closed LCS 88 before the second attack and transferred wounded men to her. After the "all clear" had been given, she was detached and directed to proceed to HAGUSKI with wounded and some intelligence material recovered from the body of one of the enemy pilots by LCS 109. After her departure, the body of another Jap pilot was located by this ship, who directed LCS 109 to close it and recover for intelligence material. This was given to U.S.S. DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD779) for delivery to ComPhibsPac upon return to port, after arrival of her relief, the U.S.S. BENNION (DD662).

8. Since during theaction the group had moved about 8 miles north of the center of the picket station, and LCS 88 was unable to maneuver without her rudder (jammed full left), LCS 114 took her in tow and all ships proceeded in company to the picket station to await arrival of salvage tug which would tow her back to KERAMA RETTO. U.S.S. BENNION (DD662) arrived about 1315and relieved U.S.S. DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD779). U.S.S. UTE (ATR78) escorted by U.S.S. FAIR (DE35) arrived at 1330 to take tow, after which she returned to KERAMA RETTO, escorted by FOX and FAIR. LCS 114 thus relieved of tow rejoined formation on normal patrol.

9. The disposition of the support craft and destroyers for the first attack as shown on the track chart provided a maximum amount of fire power through which the attackers could not pass. The unlucky hit on LCS 88 caused the support craft to circle and support her during the second attack. The bulk of their firing during this attack plus that of U.S.S. DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD779) was directed at planes overhead, and, although no one on

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U. S. S. HARRY F. BAUER (DM 26)

[redacted]

c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif,
13 May 1945

[redacted]

Subject: Observations made during air attack 11 May 1945.

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board this ship saw anything but the combat air patrol in that spot, there may have been as our attention was centered on repelling the attack from the north. As the brunt of the burden of repelling these planes fell upon this ship, it is thought that all of theheavy and accurate fire that met them was hers. The number of 5" VT prematures was far above all expectancy, one exploding about 400 yards on the starboard beam showering the ship with fragments. Several 5" bursts were noted an estimated five feet ahead of the planes, but they kept coming in. The automatic weapons (including .50 and .30 caliber machine guns) saved the day, plus the extreme maneuverability afforded by double rudders. The work of thesupport craft during the action was excellent and special credit should be given to the commanding officer of LCS 114 (Lieutenant Gerald W. MEFFERD) who took immediate charge of them during this vessel's tour of duty on radar picket station No. 5.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations.

(a) This ship has undergone two daylight suicide attacks in which a total of fourteen (14) planes were involved, has splashed six planes, one probable, and assisted with three others; receiving negligible damage to herself and with only one unit of the group seriously damaged. Although the luck factor has undoubtedly played an important part, it is considered that certain basic principles of combatting this form of attack were involved. In the report on the previous attack, they were mentioned but are repeated again.

(b) Utilize radar and lookouts to maximum extent to locate and identify all contacts, so that ship will have earliest possible warning of enemy planes, and will know location of friendlies.

(c) Open fire on enemy at maximum range with 5", using other weapons as plane or planes come within range with maximum volume of fire.

(d) Keep sharp lookout for plane or planes other than those under, have combat continually searching for new bogeys rather than tracking the ones under fire.

File No. DM26/A16-3/ajs
Serial: 004

U. S. S. HARRY F. BAUER (DM 26)

[redacted]

c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
13 May 1945

[redacted]

Subject: Observations made during air attack 11 May 1945.

(e) Delegate authority to quadrant officers to open fire on enemy, andhave them sufficiently well trained in recognition so that there will be no mistake.

(f) Use maximum speed on available boiler power, trying to keep target on beam using radical maneuvers as necessary.

(g) Keep destroyers concentrated for mutual support, and stay as close to support craft as speed will permit, preferably being between them and enemy when attack develops, so that VT can be used.

(h) More close in fire power is recommended. Additional 20 mm. and 50 cal. could be installed in mine tracks and manned by repair parties.

RICHARD C. WILLIAMS, JR.

cc: Cominpac
Cominron THREE
Comindiv SEVEN
ComScreen (CTG 51.5)

LCI(L) FLOTILLA SIX
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

P11-1 JWT-T
Serial 0186.

11 May 1945.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commander Task Unit 51.19.5
To : Commander Task Group 51.15

Subject: Suicide Planes - Countermeasures.

Reference: (a) CTF 51 Dispatch Ø6Ø9ØØ
(b) CTG 51.1 Dispatch Ø7Ø238.

Enclosure: (A) Reports from C.O.'s., of LCI's 567, 465, 452, 580, 568, 373 and CTU 52.18.1

1. The reports listed as Enclosure (A), are from ships or commands who have been under suicide plane attacks.

2. Recommendations for countermeasures must be broken down into two general categories. (A) Attacks during daylight. (B) Attacks during darkness.

(A) Attacks during daylight.

1. Improved early warning facilities providing adequate information as to location, course, speed, altitude and number of bogies.

2. Anchorages should be planned and ships anchored with AA defense in mind.

3. Anchorages not combined with sea plane areas could be ringed with barrage balloons to counteract low level attacks. High angle steep glide attacks somewhat preclude ships firing into each other.

4. LCI types on patrol should never operate alone - Patrols of sections of three would be preferred, two desirable, alone only when it cannot be avoided.

5. LCI's should patrol at standard speed, and when attack is iminent should circle at full speed. (Refer to Appendix 5 to Transport Doctrine Amphibious Forces, U. S. Pacific Fleet, Part 3 Chapter XVII Section 7) Thereby offering a difficult target while unmasking the most guns in a mutual Fire Support set up.

6. Increase the armament of LCI's to render them less vulnerable from astern - The only armament on LCI's that can be trained astern are the two after 20 M/M. There are many ways this could be done, for examples 1. Replace the two 20 M/M by two 40 M/M mounts, placing the two 20 M/M mounts on port and starboard at the fantail. 2. Replace the present single 20 M/M mounts with twin 20 M/M mounts and the addition of two 20 M/M twins port and starboard on the fantail. 3. Replacing the two after single 20 M/M mounts with twin 20 M/M mounts, erecting a platform over the after winch, and installing a "Thunderbolt" Quad 20 M/M mount. 4. The least desirable but, none the less acceptable suggestion would be the advantageous installation of numerous twin 50 cal. mounts about the ship. The LCI's known to have been damaged by suicide planes were for the most part attacked from astern.

7. Extensive and frequent AA shoots should be held - The frequency of these shoots is the most important factor - LCI's have done quite well in splashing planes but, had they had regular practice rather than the usual brief shoot on the way to an operation type of training, its certain their record would be better.

(B) Attacks during darkness.

1. During darkness or when under smoke screen LCI's should rarely open fire but, should exploit to the fullest, the factor of concealment. If underway on patrol station the ship should steam at steerageway on a wandering course, thereby showing no wake. If in bright moonlight endeavor to close the dark side of land for additional concealment, follow dark patches caused by clouds, in short, try to hide.

/s/ A. R. MONTGOMERY
Commander, USN
Commanding

Serial 03 - 45

USS LCI (G) 559
FLEET POST OFFICE
San Francisco, Calif.

10 May 1945

[redacted]

From: Commanding Officer.
To : Lt. Commander Rickabaugh
Commander Task Unit 52.17.1.

Subject: Suicide plane, Countermeasures.

References: (a) CTF 51 dispatch 060900
(b) CTF 52.17.1 Ltr. P11 - 1 / RLS
Serial 003

Enclosure: (A) Subject Report.

1. In accordance with reference (a) and (b) the report of this vessels experiences with suicide planes (and opinions of the Commanding Officer concerning same) is herewith forwarded.

James M. Horner
Commanding Officer.

Serial 05 - 45

USS LCI (G) 559
FLEET POST OFFICE
San Francisco, Calif.

[redacted]

10 April 1945

Basic Facts:

As derived from my records and observations.
I make my statements with full realization of human errors in opinions based on observation while under battle activity.

(1) I have personally observed no less than 78 suicide crash dives since 10 October, 1944 at Leyte, through Lingayen invasion, and to date in Okinawa Gunto.

(2) Of the 78 suicide planes observed the results were as follows:

Perfect Hits	10
Partial Hits	6
Misses	62

(3) I have never observed a suicide plane to "under-shoot" his target unless damaged. They "over-shoot" the target, are off in deflection, or both.

(4) Of the 16 hits made, 10 hits were on targets underway. All hits were basically high (mast and upper decks). No hits were made on the water line.

(5) All 10 perfect hits were made from 30 degrees to 45 degree dives. 7 hits were made from the flanks, 2 from astern, 1 from dead ahead.

(6) Of the 6 partial hits, 2 were vertical dives, 2 were of near level 30 degree dives or less, and 2 were of 45 degree dives.

(7) Of the 16 hits made 2 were vertical dives, 4 were from astern, 1 from dead ahead, 9 were from the flanks.

Conclusions:

(1) I consider it advisable to head toward all attacking planes, using full speed, taking the plane off either bow at only an angle sufficient to get main batteries and greatest number side guns trained on target.

(2) The 40 MM is the best gun we have for use against suicide planes, All ships need more of them.

(3) While in patrol areas, ships should pair up (or group), for known approaching raids.

(4) While in a column the ships should maneuver to head toward attacking plane, thus giving greater support to the ships astern (the last ship in column is the one nearly always attacked).

Enclosure (A) USS LCI (G) 559 Ltr. 05 - 45

Enclosure A

USS LCI (G) 567
% FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

[redacted]

11 May 1945

From: The Commanding Officer

To : COM FLOT 6

Subject: Suicide Planes : Countermeasures

References: (1) Com Flot 6 Dispatch 0169 dated 7 May 1945

1. Subject report is submitted as directed in reference (1).

2. Sketches showing the two attacks on this ship are attached.

3. The following report on suicides on this ship and recommended counter measures is quoted directly from an action report submitted 19 April 1945:

Daylight Air Attacks.

The ship was attacked twice by suicide aircraft. Detailed description is given in order to assist the development of counter-tactics.

The first attack was made by a Val at 1835 Item on April 8, when this ship, followed at 400 yards by one other LCI, was on anti-boat patrol station north of Ie Shima. Ship was at GQ and thoroughly alert, due to word of several previous attacks on that station. Val was first sighted dead abeam headed astern at about 3000 yards range and about 2000 feet altitude. He had apparently just come down out of the over-cast, which was at about 2500 feet. Val went at his best speed until on the port quarter of the two-ship column, when he turned and commenced his run.

Ship was put at full speed when Val was sighted, and was put at left standard rudder when he commenced run in order to bring broadside to bear. Fire was opened with 40mm at extreme range in order to warn ship astern. Although turn was fast enough to keep port 20mm and .50 cal bearing, it was not fast enough to keep port 40mm bearing, and only a few 40mm rounds were gotten off.

In accordance with previous instructions 20mm and .50 cal held fire until Val was within 1000 yards. All such port guns completed or substantially completed emptying their magazines as Val banked over ship astern and across our stern at about 500 yards. He then continued to bank and dove at our ship from the starboard quarter, receiving fire from the starboard and fantail guns, which emptied their magazines just as he reached the ship. Altogether, three 20mm and five .50 cal guns were emptied at him at extremely close range. 20mm bursts were observed on his

fuselage, and .50 cal tracer in substantial quantities was seen to enter him. Pieces of the greenhouse flew off as he neared the ship, and he appeared to be out of control, going into a vertical bank and skimming down the starboard side of the ship at about twenty yards until his wing hit the water and he crashed a few yards in front of the bow.

There is no doubt that if the ship had not been in a hard left turn it would have been struck. As it was, the ship passed through the column of water thrown up, and was littered with pieces of engine cowling, duralumin ribs, oil, etc. from stem to stern.

There was no fire, and the bomb if any was a small one, since the pilot's body was seen more or less complete hanging under his opened chute in the water. Attempts to pick him up for intelligence purposes were abandoned due to the undesirability of stopping for any length of time during the twilight and with unidentified aircraft in the vicinity.

The second attack, also by a Val, was made in an identical manner at 0800 Item on 10 April, in the same area North of Ie Shima. This time ship was second ship in a column of two, and first observed the Val at about 5000 yards on the starboard quarter. Ship was immediately put at full speed, right standard rudder, and 40mm opened at extreme range to warn ship ahead. Val dove immediately when fired upon, using a curving course with the apparent intention of attacking from astern. Due to rapid turning of ship his bearing remained on the starboard quarter until the plane passed over the stern.

Forty mm fire was very poor, no hits being obtained. The speed of the attack was such that relatively few rounds could be gotten off. Starboard after 20mm (with Mark 14 sight and good gunner) again held fire until Val was close to, emptying the last of the magazine just as the plane crossed the muzzle of the gun. We claimed several hits. Starboard gun deck .50 cal got off 150 rounds, firing until the plane crossed the fantail, and also claimed hits. Fantail .50 cal gunners both got panicky (one jumping or falling overboard as wing swept near him) and only got off 50 rounds apiece, poorly aimed. Port after 20 mm did excellent shooting and claimed some hits, still having two or three rounds left when plane crashed.

In general fire was less accurate and heavy than in first attack, and plane seemed to be incontrol during last few yards of approach. At about 150 to 200 yards from the starboard quarter the pilot appeared to realize he was too far astern on the ship and went into a vertical bank, either trying to snag the ship with a wing or to pull right enough to crash it from dead astern. In any event the plane passed a few yards over the fantail in a tight right turn, passing down the port side of the ship and crashing about twenty yards off the port bow, again being snapped into the water by the low wing. Again had the ship not been in a hard right turn it would have been hit.

Plane was carrying a rather substantial bomb, which went off as it crashed, giving a typical red TNT flash and blowing little pieces of fabric, gas tanks, the pilot, etc. all over the ship. Gas tanks were of the self-sealing type. There was no fire.

An interesting side light on the attack was provided by a small rag doll, which came down intact on the fantail. It contained a letter which (upon translation by intelligence personnel) said in substance that the maker was a Japanese school-girl, who, since she could not be with the Special Attack group in the flesh, was taking the opportunity to be with them in spirit by making them mascots to carry.

The attacks may be summarized as follows:

Both were made from the quarter, in good light, with the apparent intention of coming in dead astern at the end. In both cases the plane went into a vertical bank at the last moment. Both attacks were accelerated when the plane was fired on. No strafing was noticed during either attack. In both cases the plane hit the water where the ship would have been if it had not been turning at full speed. In both cases not over 15 seconds elapsed between the plane getting into effective 40mm range and hitting the water, a period of time insufficient for much 40mm fire.

On the basis of the above experience, and after discussion with other LCI's that have been under similar attack, the following recommendations are made:

(a) Wherever the tactical situation does not demand otherwise, small vessels should travel in groups and should close DD or heavier types during twilight and red alerts. (The foregoing may appear to be mere horse-sense, but as of current date it is still not being done systematically).

(b) LCI gunboats used on outlying patrols should be outfitted as quickly as possible with half a dozen twin .50 cal mounts in order to have heavy brief-duration close-range fire power; and in addition after single 20mm should be replaced with twin 20mm.

(c) Gun crews should be briefed again and again on the importance of holding 20mm fire so as to be able to shoot during the last part of the run, and use of Mark 14 sight should be insisted upon on the after guns.

(d) Liberal use of voice radio or "Emerg Victor" hoists should be made to alert ships in company upon spotting enemy planes, since the first burst of gun-fire usually precipitates the attack. No small part of the advantage of closing heavy vessels lies in the fact that their five inch guns and air search radar give a few extra minutes warning.

(e) Ships should go to full speed when enemy sighted, in order that turns may be made rapidly to keep plane on bearing most favorable for gunfire.

(f) Suicide attacks are hard on morale because of the suddenness with which they develope, (requiring constant condition one or two watches and intense air-look-out alertness when on outlying patrol), and because of the apparent impossibility of stopping the planes. The plain fact that in a period of two weeks (in our flotilla alone) the Nips have paid around 25 planes in order to get two masts, a 20mm gun, and two men, should be widely publicized, and if possible gunboats patrolling popular "suicide resorts" during the day should be relieved of Q-boat patrol occasionally during the night, since standing a tight condition two watch both day and night is in itself wearing on the nerves.

K. C. FLORY,
LT. USNR

COPY

jam

U.S.S. HENRY A. WILEY (DM-29)
C/o Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, Calif.

DM29/A16
Serial: (046)

15 May 1945.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander Task Force Fifty-One.

Subject: Recommended procedure for combatting "suicide attacks".

Reference: (a) CTF 51's dispatch 141100.

Enclosure: (A) Copy of HENRY A. WILEY Conf. Ltr. Ser: 044 dated 12 May 1945 to CTG 52.2

1. Pursuant to reference (a), enclosure (A) is submitted herewith.

P. H. BJARNASON.

C O P Y

U.S.S. HENRY A WILEY (DM-29)
c/o Fleet Post Office, San Francisco Calif.

12 May 1945

DM29/A16
Serial: (044)

[redacted]

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander, Minecraft, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Recommended procedure for combatting "suicide attacks".

References: (a) CTG 52.2's despatch 070656 of May 1945.
(b) CTF 51's despatch 060900 of May 1945.

1. Pursuant to reference (a), there is submitted herewith this vessel's procedure in handling itself during "suicide attacks".

A. Ship Handling

I. Condition of Readiness

1. Ship goes to General Quarters whenever an unidentified plane approaches within 20 miles.
2. Ship remains at General Quarters as long as any bogeys are within 40 miles.

II. Handling the Conn

1. Captain stands directly behind the helmsman and handles the annunciators himself - this avoids delay in reporting orders, especially when guns are firing, and permits him to more readily hear the information supplied by the talkers by being inside the wheel house away from the gun blast.
2. Once a target is determined to be a "bogey", the Captain concentrates on maneuvering the ship to keep target on the beam, and the Gunnery Officer opens fire when ready without further word from the Captain.

III. Maneuvering

1. When target approaches to within 16,000 yards, maneuver to bring plane on beam and keep him there.

IV. Speed.

1. During daylight or bright moonlight, when target has closed to an "advance range" of 10,000 yards, accelerate as fast as possible from the normal patrol speed (10 or 15 knots) to 26 knots - this practice has resulted in several "near misses" being splashed astern.

165

ENCLOSURE (A)

[redacted]

Subject: Recommended procedure for combatting "suicide attacks".

IV. Speed (Continued)

2. During dark or reduced visibility, increase normal cruising speed by 10 knots, when plane gets in to 8000 yards. This is done, however, only when plane is a "low flier", appearing on SG screen and when it is intended to fire on him. If target is flying high, it is unlikely that he will see you on a dark night.

B. Employment of the Ship's Armament.

I. Commence firing "salvo" fire when advance range reaches 10,000 yards.

II. Shift to "rapid continuous" fire when the advance range reaches 3,500 yards.

III. It is considered good doctrine to open fire, when target plainly in sight, with the 40mm battery when target closes to 5,000 yards.

IV. Use full optical control for surprise attacks, and, of course, full radar at night.

C. C.I.C.

I. The following employment of the two (2) JA talkers with JA phones in combat, is a variation in the standard C.I.C. procedure. One talker watches the surface (SC) PPI scope for low-flying planes, and the other watches the air plot board for all approaching planes. These talkers keep the bridge, control, and lookouts posted on the relative bearings of friendlies and bogeys.

II. Maintain the SC radar on the 20-mile scale, but record and convert all bogey information received on the Inter-Fighter Director circuit to ranges and bearings from own ship. Keep a steady flow of true bearings and ranges going to the Captain. Use of the 21MC or voice tube is not recommended.

III. Have the Intercept Officer, if not actually engaged in interception, assist the SC radar operator at the PPI.

2. When two vessels are assigned to a radar picket station it is essential that each know and understand the procedure of the other that will be followed in event of air attack. There is naturally a variance of opinion, but certain points of standard doctrine should be established. These are submitted for consideration.

COPY

U. S. S. HENRY A. WILEY (DM-29)
% Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, California.

[redacted]

Subject: Recommended procedure for combatting "suicide attacks".

A. Lead ship should normally be O.T.C. and he must realize that in bringing the target on the beam must be accomplished soon enough to permit the vessel astern to get into firing position and still remain in column. This is important if the benefit of "mutual protection" from all sides is to be achieved.

B. In event of multiple targets, the O.T.C. should designate the targets for each ship. This should not preclude the exercise of initiative by the second ship, however, in selecting a surprise target.

C. Should both vessels be firing at one target and another present itself, it is recommended that, situation permitting, the lead vessel continue fire at original target while second ship shift to new target maneuvering if necessary to take it under fire. After the action the two vessels should join up immediately.

D. The two DD's should remain at least 5 miles from the small rescue vessels. This will prevent their blanking out an arc of fire and will insure their not restricting the DD's maneuvering. Another desirable solution is that the DD's patrol at 10 knots ahead of column with the "little fellers" and then proceed independently when attack is imminent. In a prolonged action, however, it would be possible that the little fellers would get in the way.

P. H. BJARNASON.

2nd Endorsement on
CO, USS WILLMARTH Conf. Ltr. DE638/A16-3
Serial No. 06 datod 17 April 1945.

3 May 1945

CTG63/A16-3
Serial 0017

[redacted]

From: Commander Task Group 51.9.
To : Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander Task Force 51.
(2) Commander FIFTH Fleet.
(3) Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: USS WILLMARTH (DE(TE)638) Action Report - Supplement to, Lessons learned and recommendations:

1. Forwarded.

F. MOOSBRUGGER.

cc:
CO, USS WILLMARTH.

CED40/A16-3
Serial No. 003

[redacted]

Commander Escort Division FORTY
USS WILLMARTH (DE-638), Flagship
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California.
22 April 1945.

First Endorsement on
WILLMARTH (DE-638) ltr Serial
No. 06 dated 17 April 1945.

From: Commander Escort Division FORTY.
To : The Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet.

Via : (1) Commander Task Group 51.5.
(2) Commander Task Force 51.
(3) Commander, FIFTH Fleet.
(4) Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: U.S.S. WILLMARTH (DE(TE)(638) Action Report - Supplement to, Lessons learned and recommendations.

1. Forwarded, concurring with the "Lessons Learned" and "Recommendations" of basic letter.

2. Commander Escort Division FORTY has witnessed suicide plane attacks made upon two ships of this Division (FOREMAN and WITTER) from the bridge of the ship being attacked. In both cases the ship began obtaining hits while the plane was a long way off but could not put up enough lead to keep the plane from coming in. The FOREMAN was lucky and sustained only minor damage when the plane scraped the ship's side under the bridge. The WITTER, under simultaneous attack by two planes, one from the starboard beam and one from broad on the starboard bow, shot down the one coming in from the bow but could not stop the one coming in from the beam quite soon enough and sustained a waterline hit.

3. Commander Escort Division FORTY is convinced, from the personal observations noted above, and from the fact that two other ships of this Division (WHITEHURST and BOWERS) have been hit by suicide planes (both ships had previously shot down other attacking planes) that the fire power of these ships (3" Destroyer Escorts) is not adequate to stop a determined attack, especially a coordinated attack.

4. The reported strength of the remaining Japanese Fleet is such as to render it most improbable that there will ever be any opportunity to use the torpedoes carried by these ships, and the space and weight allotted to the torpedoes and tubes could be used to great advantage in strengthening their fire power.

CED40/A16-3
Serial No. 003

[redacted]

First Endorsement on
WILLMARTH (DE-638) ltr Serial
No. 06 dated 17 April 1945.

Subject: U.S.S. WILLMARTH (DE(TE)638) Action Report - Supplement to, Lessons learned and Recommendations.

- -

5. Commander Escort Division FORTY recommends the installation of three (3) twin 40MM in place of the present quad. 1.1 mount and torpedoes, and one (1) twin 40MM in place of the forward upper 20MM on all 3" Destroyer Escorts which are to operate where they will be exposed to Japanese air attacks.

FREDERIC W. HAMES.

Copies: Cominch (Read. Div.) - One (1) adv. copy.
CinCPac - Three (3) adv. copies.
ComDesPac - One (1) copy direct.
CO USS WILLMARTH - One (1) copy direct.

DE(TE)638/A16-3
Serial No. 06.
AIR MAIL
[redacted]

U. S. S. WILLMARTH (DE 638)
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California.
17 April 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander in Chief, U. S. FLEET.
Via : (1) The Commander, Escort Division FORTY.
(2) The Commander, Task Group 51.5.
(3) The Commander, Task Force 51.
(4) The Commander, FIFTH FLEET.
(5) The Commander in Chief, U. S. PACIFIC FLEET.

Subject: U.S.S. WILLMARTH (DE(TE)638) Action Report - Supplement to, Lessons learned and recommendations.

Reference: (a) U.S.S. WILLMARTH ltr DE(TE)638/A16-3 serial 05 of 10 April 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Subject report.

1. Report on lessons learned and recommendations is hereby submitted.

J. G. THORBURN, Jr.

Copy:Cominch (Read.Div.) One (1) adv. copy.
CincPac - Three (3) advance copies.
ComDesPac - One (1) copy direct.

1. LESSONS LEARNED:

(a) Fire power of subject type Destroyer Escort forward is insufficient to stop suicide planes once they have commenced their dive, unless a direct hit by 3" non-influence shell is registered.
(b) That 3" influence ammunition is insufficiently lethal at its present bursting range to cripple potential suicide planes before they have started their dive.
(c) That the Mk. 51 3" director efficiently operated will place a large percentage of shells closer tothe target than the present bursting range of Mk. 45 3" ammunition, at ranges of about 5000 yards.
(d) In times of good visibility maneuverability of subject type Destroyer Escorts at twenty (20) knots or more makes them a difficult target, either to suicide dive successfully, or for planes to reach a favorable position for their dive.

In the case of (a) this vessel was unable to bring either the 1.10 quad or 3" gun aft to bear during the dive. 20MM and 3" fire was accurate and heavy (see reference) but the plane completed its dive.

In the case of (b) this vessel registered a certain seven and possibly nine Mk. 45 hits before the plane went into its dive. All bursts rocked the plane, and it eventually was trailing smoke. It is believed that the plane was actually "shot down" before the dive started, and that the dive which was from a fairly unfavorable angle was a last measure. However, the plane was insufficiently crippled to spoil its maneuverability.

In the case of (c) some ten minutes of maneuvering and dodging were consumed while the plane went in and out of cloud cover in an effort to reach a favorable dive position. At no time was more than twenty (20) degree rudder used, and speed was twenty (20) knots. While it is not certain whether the failure to dive was due to indecision, or confusion arising from this vessel's short turning circle which presented a deflection shot at all times, it is believed that the maneuvers were of major importance in preventing the dive.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

(a) This vessel is currently equipped with a quadruple 1.10 and a Mk. 1 Mod. 1 drive. The performance of the gun has been excellent, but that of the drive (now obsolescent) has been erratic and at times dangerous, necessitating an inordinate amount of overhaul by ship's force tobe kept in even fair operation condition. Furthermore, while having a very high rate of fire the gun has neither the range nor the "killing" power of the 40MM

It is understood that the eventual armament of Destroyer Escorts in this area will be three(3) twin 40MM, power driven and director controlled, two being in place of the torpedo tubes now mounted, and one in the pace of the 1.10 quad. The latter replacement is of a highly urgent nature as far as the 1.10 is concerned, and it is recommended that priority is given to such. However, the replacement of the tubes by two (2) twin 40MM, while a step in the right direction does not appear to solve the problem presented in 1. (a). The following modification is hereby submitted for consideration and approval.

1. Replace the present 1.10 quad with a twin or quad 40MM, which can be done with a minimum of structural change.
2. Replace the torpedo tubes with one (1) twin 40MM with separate Mk. 51 director on the center line, stepped high enough to permit horizontal fire over the after twin/quad.
3. Replace the two (2) 20MM guns forward of the pilot house with the third proposed twin 40MM with separate director if possible, otherwise tied into the 3" director on the bridge. Structural changes here as well would be at a minimum. Clipping and ready ammuntion facilities are available.

Accomplishment of the above would provide a high order of fire power forward (See 1.(a)), as well as aft and on the beam. Weight removals, including 1.10, tubes, and 20MM and mounts, total in excess of sixteen (16) tons, which the proposed additions would not exceed. The heavy machine gun battery would be of decidedly longer range and hitting power, and would bear partially at least directly forward and on narrow bow angles.

(b) With the increase of adequate Mk. 51 and 52 director installation the 3" Mk. 45 fuze could be modified to reduce its bursting range to 45-50 feet, without materially effecting the number of bursts now scored. If in addition the bursting charge could be increased or strengthened it is firmly believed that a large number of crippling hits could result. The vessel noted several in which both range and deflection were excellent, but which burst at their maximum influence range below the target. (See 1.(b) and (c).

It is evident that these vessels are large enough to be considered good targets by suicide planes, yet their heavy and light m.g. battery is often less than smaller and less attractive ships. It is believed that the above recommendations, especially 2.(a) would materially solve this problem, and could be accomplished in the field with a minimum of structural change, and no decrease in stability.

ENCLOSURE TO WILLMARTH ltr DE(TE)638/
A16-3 Serial 06 of 17 April 1945.

DD/734/A12

Serial: 003 U.S.S. PURDY

S[redacted] 26 May 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet.
Via : The Commander Task Force 51 (Vice Admiral R.K. TURNER, USN, Commander Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet).

Subject: AA Procedure Used Against Japanese Suicide Planes.

Reference: (a) CincPac Secret despatch 160558.
(b) CTF 51 Secret despatch 141100.

1. In the action against enemy planes in the Okinawa area 6-12 April 1945 the following fire control set-up procedure were used.

(a) Main battery controlled in full automatic by the Mk. 37 director in all attacks.
(b) Normal plotting room set-up using partial radar and full automatic rate control.
(c) 40mm quads controlled by their respective Mk. 63 director.
(d) 40mm twins controlled by their respective Mk. 51 director except when targets were obscured by smoke from the main battery; then shifted to the Mk. 37 director.

2. On several occasions the enemy used decoys to attract fire and attention from the attacking planes. With alert lookout, combat, and control teams this presents no real problem in determining the most dangerous targets. A few bursts were fired in direction of decoys.

3. The lack of enemy coordination in multiple attacks was noticeable. The presence of friendly fighters during a portion of the period probably was responsible for lack of coordination on the part of the attackers.

4. It is believed that a low percent of the Mk. 40 Mod. 1 and 5 fuses functioned properly, although positive proof of performance is lacking.

5. No special technique or methods were used. Whatever success was attained is attributable in some degree to the following:

(a) Excellent fire control and radar equipment installed: in particular to the Mark 12 and Mark 22 radars installed on the Mk. 37 (5 inch battery) director and to the Mark 63 Fire Control System installed on the 40mm quad mounts.

(b) The stationing of one officer at each of the four (4) 40mm directors (2 twin and 2 quads) with specific duties as quadrant control officer for all automatic weapons in his sector. Primarily this officer took active and positive control of the 40mm mount in his quadrant with full authority to open or cease fire at discretion.

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(c) The use of an unusual sound-power telephone hook-up, used only for suicide plane attacks, in which each 20mm group control station, each 40mm control station, the 5 inch director, gun plot, Combat, and Battle One were in direct communication with each other on the same circuit (JW and 49JY cross-connected). The advantage of this many outlet hook-up was that each interested station received instant and simultaneous reports of all air contacts made by radar, by lookouts, or as received from external source without the usual errors and delays incident to relay by various circuits. The disvantage of an overloaded communication circuit is obvious; however, careful instruction, intense training, and indoctrination reduced interference to a minimun. The point is that this system worked successfully and no enemy plane was able to make an undetected or an unfired on approach. Each station was kept fully informed of the actual or prospective presence of friendly planes, decoys, attacking suiciders, etc. On the 2200 ton type destroyer the JW-49JY cross- connection can be made by installation of the toggle switch-type jack box in CIC with inputs of JW (or JA), 49JY1, 49JY2, 49JY3, 49JY4 circuits.

FRANK L. JOHNSON

Copy to:

CincPac - direct	(1)
CTF 51	(1)
ComDesPac-direct	(1)
CDS 63 - direct	(1)
CDD 126- direct	(1)
File	(1)

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Assemble SAIPAN by 22 March.
Logistics 22 to 24 March.
Depart SAIPAN by 1500 (KING) 23 March (0500(GCT) 23 March).

Proceed along Routes RAMBLER and AMBUSH, to Point BOTTLE, thence via Route FORAY and Points TOPPER, CHOIR, CURATE and BISHOP, thence to arrive KERAMA RETTO at 0900 (ITEM) 28 March (0000(GCT) 27 March).

Speed of advance 12.5 knots.

CTF 52 on advice of CTG 51.1 may delay arrival of this Group.

Exceptions

[redacted] with TF